THE

GOSPEL - VISITER,

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION

DEVOTED

TO THE EXHIBITION AND DEFENCE

OF GOSPEL - PRINCIPLES & GOSPEL - PRACTICE

IN THEIR PRIMITIVE PURITY AND SIMPLICITY, IN ORDER TO

PROMOTE CHRISTIAN UNION, BROTHERLY LOVE &

UNIVERSAL CHARITY.

"*For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*" Rom. i. 16.

HENRY KURTZ, Editor.

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THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER.

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PREFACE
TO VOLUME FOURTH.

In commencing this present volume we were powerfully reminded of the words of the Lord, recorded by the prophet (Isai. lv. 8.) "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Had we foreseen four years ago, what amount of labor and responsibility, what anxiety, what trials, temptations and difficulties would devolve on us by undertaking this work, we would have shrunk from the task, and felt ourselves utterly unequal to bear such a burden at this our time of life. But younger brethren, in the full vigor of manhood, and apparently sincere and willing to be faithful, had offered their assistance, and at the same time feeling it our duty to do what little we could in the service of our divine Master and his Gospel, trusting with a firm reliance in that aid from on high, which is never denied to those that need and sincerely ask for it, and also expecting help from those who had offered it, we ventured out on the perilous voyage upon the stormy sea of publicity. Our thoughts were then, long ere this to retire again to private life, and leave the management of our frail bark to younger and stronger hands; but our thoughts were not the Lord's thoughts. While our young brethren left us, and storms and waves threatened us, a "still small voice" still whispered to us, Don't give up the ship, while there is hope, that you may be of use to one single soul in distress, by bringing Gospel-light into her darkness, clearing up her doubts, removing her difficulties, cheering her despondence, and strengthening her faith and hope, and also be of some use to the church by carrying messages of love to and fro through the length and breadth of our land.

Again, when it seemed for some six months back, that our way would lead us perhaps once more back to our old "Fatherland," to an aged mother and beloved sister, who united their voices with others to call us there, and we were willing to submit as the Lord would direct, and our beloved elder brethren at the recent yearly meeting would advise, and felt at any rate a desire to rest a while from our editorial labors,—and our brethren unanimously declared, though they would leave the matter rather to our own choice and decision, that the present state of the world, especially the existing war between four great powers of Europe, in which perhaps all the other nations, and even our own, might eventually be involved, together with other considerations would make a journey to Europe just now unadvisable;—on the other hand, the readers of the Visiter generally being desirous to have the publication regularly continued, it appeared to us plainly, that our ways in this instance would not have been the Lord's ways now, and that we must deny ourselves, and labor here, while it is yet day, seeing that a night has broke in over Europe, of which we cannot see the end, and in which perhaps "no man can work," evangelically. And we believe, we speak out the mind of every brother in these United States

with regard to those Europeans in distress, either material or spiritual, who desire to enjoy Gospel-light and liberty, and to escape from oppression and poverty, when we say to all God-fearing friends in Germany and elsewhere,

"*Come over to America, where there is room for thousands yet to dwell; where there is bread enough and to spare for every one to earn by honest labor; and where you can serve your God according to His word, and there is none to make you afraid. But by all means bring your bibles along, and be very careful not to hearken to every strange or familiar voice. Here in this land of liberty the grossest errors, the most refined infidelity live in close neighborhood with simple Gospel-truth and the faith as it was once delivered unto the saints. Our many sects will bewilder you; your own prejudices and predilections will lead you astray, if you do not pay strict attention to the word of God, and try to be guided by it alone. But if you seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, as it is revealed, not by* LUTHER *or any other man, but by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* (Rom. i. 17.) *then all these things,* i. e. *what ye shall eat, what ye shall drink, and wherewithal ye shall be clothed, shall be added unto you.*"

Thus then it has come to pass, that after a very short respite we commence our labors again. Though we would have preferred, to rest a little longer from the incessant work and responsibility of editorship, and to carry through our intention of finishing the second edition of last volume, before we commence the present, we feel willing to submit to what it seems to be our present duty, and may truly say, that we are greatly relieved by being excused from that journey to Germany, the call to which has been laying heavily on our mind for the past six months. All our prayer is, that our labors may not be in vain; that we may be enabled by grace divine to do our work so, as may be acceptable and beneficial to our dear readers, and wellpleasing in the sight of God. Continue, dear brethren, to assist us with your prayers, and with every good word or work, that you can speak or do in our or in behalf of the Gospel-Visiter, and believe us when we say, that in all we speak or write we have or desire no other aim, but to be your humble fellow-servants in the Lord, and helpers of your joy.

For the Visiter.

SHALL THE PROPHECIES BE FULFILLED?

The present war in Europe is for the believer in the word of prophecy a remarkable sign of the times. The question with him is not, Whether the prophecies of old shall be fulfilled or not? For as a believer he cannot doubt for a moment of the actual fulfillment of every prophecy in due time. But the question with him is, Shall some of those prophecies find their fulfillment now, in this present war, and in its issue?

This is not a question of idle curiosity, with which Christians have nothing to do. No, no. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." The word of prophecy is to us, what the miracles were to those who saw them,—a testimony full, strong and undeniable of the truth of the Word of God. Whatever infidelity has to say against the word of God, the gradual and obvious fulfilment of its prophecies will refute their arguments,

and make infidelity the more inexcusable, while those who watch the signs of the times with the Bible in their hands, will be more and more established in their faith.

Thus the existence of that ancient nation of the Jews in every part of the globe, notwithstanding all the sufferings, persecutions and dispersions, they had to undergo, while most other and far greater nations of old have become extinct and swallowed up by more modern nations,—I say, the Jews are living witnesses to the truth of the Bible, a standing monument of the fulfillment of the prophecy of our Saviour, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. xxiv. 34.

Now just as sure as the Lord has fulfilled his threatenings against this people and also the promise, that it shall not pass, to this day, so sure he will fulfill those other promises concerning them, of their being gathered again from their long dispersion, and possessing & inhabiting their own land again in peace, as predicted by almost all the prophets. See Ezek. xi. 17. Jerem. xxxii. 37. Hos. i. 11. &c. With regard to this prophecy, so often repeated, we deem the present war in Europe worthy the attention of all, who would observe the signs of the times, and in order to be convinced of this more fully, let us consider, not idle fancies, but the following simple facts.

1. The first apparent *cause* of this war, was a dispute about the so-called holy places in that very land, *) which God promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their seed for an everlasting possession. This is one remarkable, significant circumstance.

2. Another remarkable fact is, that though the land of PALESTINE is now in the hands of the TURKS, the followers of that *false* prophet, MUHAMED, who despise both Jews and Christians, they hold it only conditionally, as *tenants*, and so it will be held, until God establishes his ancient people of Israel

*) In order to comprehend this cause of the war more fully, let us remember, that after the Jews by their unbelief in& rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah, even our Lord Jesus Christ, had forfeited the goodly land promised and given to them and their forefathers, and were driven out and dispersed throughout the world, the question, who should possess this land, caused the most cruel and bloody wars, of which we have any record, in exact fulfilment of the Saviour's predictions. The history of the Jewish wars by JOSEPHUS, himself a Jew, proves this beyond contradiction, and the wars of the CRUSADERS, commencing about 1000 years afterwards, and lasting nearly 200 years, were another instance of the fanatic desire to possess this land. For more than 500 years however the TURKS have been in possession of it, and though the country lays waste, and is chiefly inhabited by robbers, the many thousand pilgrims, both of Jews and Christians, who come there every year from every part of the world, with those who make a permanent stay there, yielded to the Turks, no doubt, quite a handsome revenue. For a consideration they allowed Christians to build churches, convents, and dwellings, and some of these churches stand on particularly so-called holy ground, as for instance the church of the holy sepulchre &c. Unfortunately these Christians, though all alike in their superstitious regard of holy places, are differing from each other as elsewhere, and so there are Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic and Roman-Catholic churches crowded closely together, sometimes under one roof, and, alas for their Christianity! sometimes disputes arise among them, which have to be finally settled by the TURKISH government. This was done recently in a case of dispute between the Greeks, and Roman-Catholics, and decided in favor of the Roman-Catholics, at which the Emperor of RUSSIA, who considers himself at the head of the Greek church, was displeased, and, not obtaining what he demanded, and for all we know, had no right to demand commenced the war.

again in it, to whom he gave it for an everlasting possession; and that under present circumstances no power nor nation on earth has a better right to its possession than the TURKS, neither would any other government, except one like ours, exercise a more impartial sway over that land, than they do. Or suppose the Greek Christians, or the Roman-Catholics, or even the Jews in their present unconverted state, should obtain power and sovereignty over Palestine,—would any of these in case of a dispute, in which they had any private interest, judge as impartially as the Turks who hold them all alike?

3 A third notable fact is this, that from an apparently but trifling cause this war has arisen already to a fearful magnitude. For a long time the cloud hanging upon the horizon seemed "not bigger than a man's hand," and hopes were entertained till within a few months back, that it would pass away without doing much mischief, and that peace might be restored without great bloodshed. But, lo and behold, now *four* of the mightiest nations are already in the field, and engaged in the work of death and destruction, and how many other nations will be involved therein, before it is at an end, the Lord only knows. Enough to give us an idea of the magnitude of the present war is the fact, that those four powers, already engaged in it, have possessions, more or less, in every part of the globe, not only in Europe, but in Asia, Africa and America &c. and that consequently the effects of this war will be felt in the remotest corners of the world.

Thus far we have only mentioned such facts, as are obvious to all, and will scarcely be disputed by any; and many more such might be adduced, all tending to show, that it is both our interest and our duty to watch the events, and observe the signs of the times. But we want to be brief, as brief as possible so as to be understood, and will therefore mention only one or two things more, which we also consider as facts, but perhaps not every one will look upon them in the same light. We therefore state them simply for the consideration of the reader, in the form of questions and answers, and leave them to his own judgment.

The question has been asked, Why is it, that the ENGLISH and FRENCH, professing Christianity, have taken sides with the TURKS, who have been the ancient enemies of that religion; and why is it, that even here in this country by far the greatest number of christian professors, and even pious men, sympathize more with the *Turks* than the *Russians?*

We answer, RUSSIA has proved herself as the stronghold, friend and defender of despotism and oppression, and as the greatest and most powerful enemy of all personal, political and religious liberty, while TURKEY afforded an asylum for the oppressed and proscribed. Only think of poor HUNGARY, crushed by *Russian* power, and of KOSSUTH, protected by *Turkish* power. This explains all, and we would be almost inclined to declare it as another remarkable fact in this war, that it was actually waged about the great question, Shall despotism or liberty live and prevail?

The question has also been asked, Whether this war could not properly be called a religious war?

To this we would answer, Properly speaking there can be no *religious* war under the dispensation of the Gospel. Professors of the true religion, (which is love and good will toward all men,) cannot engage in war, either offensive or defensive, against their fellow-men.

ABEL was hated, persecuted and killed by CAIN, on account of his religion, but it was morally impossible for ABEL to hate persecute or even try to kill his brother in self-defence. That the Israelites were sometimes used as instruments of the vengeance of the Lord against wicked nations, and as executioners of divine judgments upon them, does not justify war, for they had a divine warrant for it, in each case, and proves rather, that the Israelites were themselves under the displeasure of God on account of the hardness of their hearts at the time.

But if there ever, in a less strict sense, have been religious wars, we may call this present one such. Arising from a religious dispute, originating between two powers, religiously opposed to each other, each party animated by a spirit of religious fanaticism, the stronger thirsting after religious dominion over the other, the weaker at least wishing to maintain its own;—all these circumstances give the present war a decidedly religious color and character. And though it may be objected, that the English and French, those ancient enemies to each other, have become friends, and joined in the war at least not for religious reasons, it is nevertheless a singular fact, that the four chief powers of the different regions prevailing in Europe are at war with each other, the one being the chief power of the Mahomedans, the other that of the Greek church, the third the chief power of the Roman-Catholics, and the last that of the Protestants.

These facts are ominous signs of the times, which deserve the attention of all, who have a soul to save or to lose, inasmuch as dark and perilous times are at hand; which no human foresight can penetrate, nor human power is able to prevent. The only light to guide us through this darkness in safety, is the WORD OF GOD, and especially *the word of prophecy*. Hence the question at the head of this article, "*Shall the prophecies be fulfilled?*" is a question of great moment, and even the greatest infidel, if he would only take time honestly to examine the prophecies which have already been fulfilled with regard to the first coming of the Messiah, his life and doctrine, his sufferings and death, his resurrection and ascension, his sending of the Holy Ghost and building of His church, the rejection and dispersion of the Jews &c. he would be prepared to unite with us in the belief, that all those prophecies, which have not yet come to pass, will as certainly, as plainly and as fully be accomplished in their due time.

But another question, equally interesting arises, and this is the question,

"*How shall the prophecies be fulfilled?*"

and in order to avoid making the present article too lengthy, the answer to this question shall be reserved for next No.

TRINE IMMERSION.

At the last yearly meeting a beloved brother presented to us a pamphlet, entitled:

"A DEFENCE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM BY TRINE IMMERSION; *By a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good.* Mansfield, O. Powerpress of Matthias Day, jr. 1854. 22 pages.

We have had but little time to examine it, but on a cursory perusal of the same we find that the author has employed a good deal of labor and research on the subject, and defended the cause in such a manner, which we may commend with safety, and would have no objection to insert into the Visiter, if it were not, that the author has expended a considerable sum of money on its

publication, to be realized again out of the sale of the pamphlet. We will therefore give only a short extract of the same on the point of our heading, as another testimony on the subject, and as a sample of the style and character of the pamphlet, and would say to those who would like to have the whole, that they would probably be able to obtain it by sending 4 or 5 postage stamps (12 or 15 Cts.) in a letter directed to

"*Christian Wise, Mansfield, Ohio.*"

Extract.

Thus we have shown that baptizo, means to immerse, dip, or plunge, and that by unprejudiced witnesses; we we have also shown it by Biblical authority which is infallible. And that the mode of administering this baptism, as commanded in the apostolic commission was by an immersion into each name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we are prepared to prove clearly and satisfactorily by the most learned men, and by the oracles of God.

We will make a few remarks on the arrangement of the language of the apostolic commission. It *must be* acknowledged by all unprejudiced grammarians that according to the grammatical construction of this commission it requires three actions; also it must be acknowledged to be elliptical: and if the ellipsis were supplied it would read, Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and baptizing them in the name of the Son, and baptizing them in the name of the Holy Ghost.

Now reasoning from these premises, we must arrive at a conclusion, and let us see what that conclusion is. If we were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Father without saying any thing about the Son and Holy Ghost, would it not require an action? And suppose we were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Son and not mentioning the Father or Holy Ghost, would it not require an action? And if we were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, not mentioning the Father and Son would it not require an action? But we are commanded to be baptized into each of these names, and therefore, does it not require three actions? Because being baptized into *one* of these names constitutes one action, and being baptized into three names constitutes three actions. Then we must conclude from the construction of the commission that it requires the candidate to be immersed three times, and not once—for if once, you must read the noun "name" in the commission, "names," which would destroy the ellipsis and in that case according to the genius of the English Language it would require one action, but unfortunately for those who practize single immersion, we are compelled to say that this is not the case. This view was entertained without interruption from the day of Pentecost down to St. Athanasius, when there was but one opinion—and that there *was* but one opinion, we refer you to page 470. of A. Campbell's debate with Mr. Rice, where he says, "That in this one thing of the action of baptism and the design of it there was but *one* opinion, from the day of Pentecost down to St. Athanasius—down to the fifth century." This is confirmed by Dr. Pusey and Dr. Wall.

We next adduce a sufficient number of witnesses to establish the conclusion which we have drawn from the commission as it regards trine immersion. We will present the testimony of A. Campbell, President of Bethany College, in debate with Dr. L. N. Rice, p. 258. Not only Mosheim, Neander, but all the historians, as well aa Prof. Stuart trace trine immersion to the times of the Apostles.

We will next adduce the testimony of Rev. L. N. Rice, found on page 252

of the debate with A. Campbell, where he says, "If, then, the gentleman claims the ancient church in support of immersion, I insist that he ought to immerse three times." Dr. J. G. King, in the Rites and Cerem. of the Greek church, p. 192. says, "The Greek church uniformly practizes the trine immersion, undoubtedly the most primitive manner." Sir. P. Ricaut on the "present state of the Greek Church," p. 163. says, "Thrice dipping or plunging this church holds to be as necessary to the form of baptism as water to the matter." Chamber's Cyclopedia, London, 1786, "A triple immersion was first used, and continued for a long time: this was to signify either the three days that our Saviour lay in the grave, or the persons in the Trinity; but this was afterwards laid aside, because the Arians used it: it was thought proper to plunge but once.

Pædobaptist Ex. Vol i. p. 268.: "Trine immersion or immersing three times once in the name of each of the Divine persons, was in use in the beginning of the third century. It was practized in England till the sixteenth century, and is still rigidly observed in the eastern churches."— Coleman's Christian Antiquities, p. 275: "Trine immersion was early practised in the church. The sacramentary of Gregory the great directs that the person to be baptized should be immersed at the mention of each of the persons of the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost." Stephen Papae ii.: "In the name of the Father I dip you, in the name of the Son I dip you, and of the Holy Ghost I dip you." The celebrated James Sadolet, who was first Secretary to Leo X., and afterwards created a Cardinal by Paul III. in 1536, says: "Our Trine immersion in water at baptism, and our trine emersion, denote that we are buried with Christ in the faith of the true Trinity, and that we rise again with Christ in the same belief." Chrysostom vol. ii. p. 445: The baptismal rite is thus described by this father, "Before the candidates were baptised they made the following confession: I renounce thee, Satan, and thy pomp and thy worship, and am joined to thee, O! Christ! to which they were ordered to subjoin: I believe in the resurrection of the dead. After which they are immersed three times in the flood." The mode of baptism of the church of Milan, in the twelfth century by Robinson's Hist. of Bap. The Cardinal says: "I baptize thee, dipping him once in the name of the Father: and dipping him a second time, in the name of the Son: and dipping him a third time in the name of the Holy Ghost, Amen." This church has never taken the benefit of the Pope's indulgence, but continues trine immersion to this day.

Car. Le Cointe Annales An. 470: A fount remarkable in ecclesiastical history, is that which belongs to the church of Notre Dame, in which *Clovis*, the first Christian King of the Franks, "was dipped three times in water at his baptism." Robinson in his Hist. on Bap., remarks in this passage: Modern French writers observe, with becoming dignity, that their first Christian king had too much spirit to submit to profess a religion before he had examined whether it were true: and that Vedast and Remigius first instructed him in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which he afterwards professed to believe by being *thrice* dipped at his baptism. More than three thousand Franks were baptized at the same time in the same manner." Basil A. D. 360. "By three

immersions the great mystery is accomplished." Ambrose A. D. 374, "Thou wast asked dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? Thou saidst I do believe, and wast immersed, that is, thou wast buried. Thou wast asked again, Dost thou believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and his crucifixion? Thou saidst, I believe, and wast immersed again, and so wast buried with Christ, &c."

Tertullian De Bapt., says, "The word is not in dispute, for it is clear the Roman Africans administered baptism by dipping three times, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Again, "We receive the water of baptism not merely once, but three times, at the mention of each of the three persons of the Holy Trinity;" and again, "We are plunged thrice in the water of baptism."

Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, wrote an apology for Christians, addressed to the Emperor, the People and Senate of Rome, in which he says: "After the confession being made, the candidate was thrice plunged under water at the naming of the three persons in the blessed Trinity. Mr. Reeves: "The ancients carefully observed trine immersion, insomuch that by the Canons Apostolical, either bishop or presbyter who baptized without it, was deposed from the ministry." Basil the great in De Spiritu Sancto c. 27. Jerome, in Ador Lucif. c. 4. and Ambrose in De Sacr. 2. c. 7, believed this custom to have been introduced by the apostles.

The last witness which we will adduce, is Peter King, lord high Chancellor of England, who wrote a work on the primitive church, for the M. E. church, he says on p. 222. "That the candidates were dipped once at the naming of each person of the Holy Trinity." We might produce many other witnesses in support of trine immersion, but we deem it unnecessary,—and as we have given you the history of sprinkling, we will also give you that of single immersion.

We find in Coleman's Christian Antiquities: "That single immersion was at times considered valid. This decision was given by Gregory the Great, in controversy with the Arians in Spain, who maintained that trine immersion denoted three gradations in the Godhead. Gregory, on the contrary, declared baptism by single immersion to be valid and aptly significant of the unity of the Deity." Is it not evident that if the mode of baptism was of heavenly origin, it would at all times have been valid, and would there have been any necessity of Gregory giving his decision in reference to the validity of a positive institution whose origin was in heaven? Not by any means, it is the very acme of absurdity to suppose that a mere man's decision is necessary for the observance of a *rite* of God.

For the Visiter.

THE UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE

That life is transitory, and the thread of existence very fragile, we have ample experience from the earliest glimmerings of reason. Every thing around us serves to evince the uncertainty of time Let us consider how rapidly the days have fled, and the years have elapsed, and how imperceptible has been their flight! If we attempt to recall them to our memory, to follow their rapid course, we shall find ourselves unequal to the task, and unable to mark the different epochs, unless they have been memorable for some remarkable incidents, which have made a forcible impression upon our minds.

How many years of infancy, devoted to the diversions of that tender age, have fled unheeded, and left not a trace behind! How often, during the giddy thoughtlessness of youth, when beguiled by passions, and pursuing wild pleasures, we had neither opportunity nor desire for reflection! When succeeding years have rendered a change of habit necessary, some have thought that they would act more as became rational beings; but the cares of the world occupied their attention, and so possessed their souls, as to prevent their reflecting upon the manner, in which their hours had been passed.

Old age insensibly approaches, and perhaps their will then be an equal inability and want of leisure, to reflect upon the present or to remember, what they have done, and what they have neglected to do. Thus they never know the great end which they were designed to answer in the creation. Let no one defer reflecting upon this state till old age, for he can never be certain of attaining to it.

So delicate is the tree of life, that with difficulty it advances to maturity; often nipped in the bud it perishes before its petals have expanded. Even shoots of vigor, which promised to flourish with strength and with beauty, have their sap withered and die. To leave the language of metaphor, how many a noble youth formed in nature's fairest mould, just as his virtues are beginning to open and his mind to beam, bows beneath the pale messenger. How many of the softer sex with charms sweet as the opening morn whose attractive graces entwine the heart, live but to show the beauty of nature and then as if too refined for this sphere, wing their flight to purer regions. If we are permitted to pass the period of youth safe from the dangers which threaten, we are still uncertain as to the continuance of another hour.

Then let this reflection sink deep in every heart: I am as a falling leaf, death walks by my side; perhaps to-day I shall wither and to-morrow be converted into dust; my life hangs by a thread and I may lose all my beauty and vigor in a single moment.

But if I leave behind the well-matured fruits of love, righteousness and holiness, I shall quit this world with honor, and joyfully prepare to meet my Creator and Judge, there to join with the blessed angels of light in the full chorus of pure and heavenly harmony around the throne of the Eternal God.

L. D.

* * *

GRACE, LOVE, AND MERCY.

I FIND that the goodness of God to his people is diversely expressed in his word, sometimes by the word grace, sometimes by the word love, and sometimes by the word mercy. When it is expressed by that word grace, then it is to show that what he doeth is of his princely will, his royal bounty, and sovereign pleasure. When it is expressed by that word love, then it is to show us that his affection was and is in what he doeth, and that he doeth what he doeth for us with complacency and delight. But when it is set forth to us under the notion of mercy, then it bespeaks us to be in a state both wretched and miserable, and that his bowels and compassions yearn over us in this our fearful plight.

GRACE DESCRIBED.

There are many things which men call the grace of God that are not.

1. The light and knowledge that are in every man. 2. That natural willingness that is in man to be saved.

3. That power that is in man by nature to do something, as he thinketh, towards his own salvation.

But do thou remember that the grace of God is his good-will and great love to sinners, in his Son Jesus Christ; by the which good will they are sanctified, through the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

His blood is not laws, nor ordinances, nor commandments, but a price, a redeeming price. He justifies us by bestowing upon us, not by expecting from us. He justifies us by his grace, not by our works.

OPERATION OF GRACE.

The good child is not the first-born, but Abel. God often doth as Jacob did, even cross hands in bestowing blessings, giving that which is best to him that is least esteemed; for Cain was "the man;' in Eve's esteem: she thought, when she had him, she had got an inheritance; but as for Abel (vanity,) he was little worth; by his name they showed how little they set by him.

It is so with the sincere to this day; they bear not the name of glory with the world: Cain with them is the profitable son; Abel is of no credit with them, neither see they form or comeliness in him; he is the melancholy or lowering child whose countenance spoils the mirth of the world. "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth."

Abel, last in appearance, but in truth the first in grace; as it also is at this day. Who do so flutter it out as our ruffling, formal worshipers? Alas, the good, the sincere, the humble, they seem to be least and last; but the conclusion of the tragedy will make manifest that the first is last and the last first.

"And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Herein are the true footsteps of grace discovered; the person must be the first in favor with God—the person first, the performance afterwards: for though it be true among men that the gift makes way for the acceptance of the person, yet in the order of grace it is after another manner; for if the person be not first accepted, the offering must be abominable; for it is not a good work that makes a good man, but a good man makes a good work. The fruit does not make a good tree, but a good tree bringeth forth good fruit.

* * *

POETRY.

Communicated for the Visiter.

These scenes of life are changing,
And things of time decay,
Short is a mortal's journey
The Spirit hastes away.

Soon will those scenes be closed,
This life forever past,—
This active body slumber
In native dust at last.

Dear brethren let us labor
In serving Christ the Lord;
That when these toils are over
We'll gain the great reward.

Oh! may we have our treasure
In that bright world above,
There will be endless pleasure
To bask in heav'nly love.

There with the angels holy,
Before the great I AM;
With Psalms and crowns of glory,
Praise—praise God and the Lamb.

D.

LETTER FROM JERUSALEM.

Written by Lydia Shuler, to her parents, brothers and sisters, and translated from the German by Dr. Eckert of Cumberland co. Pa.

Beloved Bro. Moses:—According to promise, I write to you and have not forgotten your letter dated the 19th of February, which I have safely kept, and rejoice much that my letter found you all well. I think often of you all, and pray that you may be guarded from the evils of this world, and be prepared for the great day of the Lord. I will now state a little of Jerusalem, and other things I have seen I will describe. We often pass the afternoon by visiting outside of the walls, to behold the holy places, such as the graves of Kings and Prophets, hewn out of rocks under ground. This valley, Jehosaphat, is where all nations shall be gathered together for Judgment. The Pool, Siloam, is where the blind man was told to go and wash, which is also called Bethesda, by the Sheep Market, where the impotent man, who had an infirmity thirty and eight years, waited for the troubling of the waters, (John v.) But now there is no water therein and half full of slime. I often wish that you could be with me and see this interesting land which the Lord has appointed for His people. On the 25th of March, Bro. Thacher, Emma and myself started on a journey to Jordan, with about six thousand pilgrims and many others, on camels, asses, mules and horses, over mountains and hills, and in about six hours arrived at Jericho, where we encamped to rest and take some of the refreshments which we had taken with us. There we beheld a beautiful city and palm trees yet remaining amidst the ruins, and the inhabitants the Arabs.

The weather was very warm and the wheat was all harvested and put up. About 2 o'clock at night we resumed our journey over a long and beautiful plain. The number of persons was supposed to be about 8000, with a company of soldiers in uniform. We arrived at that glorious stream about sunrise. All the pilgrims bathed themselves, and I too was immersed in the rolling stream. As I stood on Jordan's banks, I thought of our Saviour who was baptized in this same river and likewise many others that followed his example. Jordan probably is as broad as the Schuylkill at Reading, and runs with great speed. The tall cedars and willowtrees, laden with dew, bending over the water present a beautiful scene. We stood upon the bank gazing upon the picture for the space of an hour and a half, then we turned back and took up our march for Jericho, where we arrived about twelve o'clock, M., and remained until one o'clock at night. We then started for Jerusalem, where the party dispersed. When we came near the city in the morning we had a solemn message of the death of Brother Philip Dickson, whose corpse we met, and who had died the day before and was buried in the American Grave Yard on the Hill of Zion. He was from Massachusetts and came to this place in pursuit of health, having gone into deep consumption; but came too late to receive any benefit, although the winter here is as mild as May in Pennsylvania. We have had apples, apricots, mulberries, cucumbers, squashes and tomatoes since the middle of April, in market. The lowest degree on the thermometer through all the winter was 44 deg. but to-day it is up to 74 deg. I hold a letter from an old man in Missouri who saw a letter in a newspaper, written by some of my friends.

May 22, (Sabbath,) Since the above was written, Sister Minor and myself went to Joppa, in order to see a house and piece

of land, and on Monday morning we came to Bramley, where we lodged with the American Consul, and were treated with the greatest friendship and attention. The next morning we started and rode over the wide plains of Sharon, through ripe wheat fields, and seeing them as far as eyes can behold and not a fence or a tree to be seen; nothing but a great level; it was the most beautiful scene I have ever beheld. At noon we arrived at Joppa, where we rested an hour, and then went out to look for a house for us; we agreed for one for a thousand pistareues, ($45) for one year, and will move into it in a few weeks. On Thursday afternoon we returned to Bramley and yesterday we arrived again at Jerusalem. The Arabs began to harvest when we returned. We live here in an old house on Zion's hill; often in the cool of the evening I resort to the top of the house to behold our neighbors cultivating wheat, saphron, &c., on the roofs of their houses. On our roof grow many wild stocks of many kinds, bearing blossoms. Some have hot houses much in appearance of American prisons, the walls are very thick, with cross-iron bars outside of the windows; I have gathered many blossoms and cedars from Jordan, which I will send home if opportunity will or can be had; my mother I send a few in this letter as a pledge of love. This letter I send you by an American traveler to this place, and is waiting for my letter, therefore I must close. Live well, all of you in the far west. The blessing of God rest and remain with you all. Remember my love to all inquiring friends, also my near and dear relations, and so subscribe myself your daughter and sister.

LYDIA SHULER.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

HEAVEN AND HELL.

Those all who obey the commands of God, have the promise of an eternal rest in heaven, and we have a full account of that happy place. In the first place we find, it is a place of purity; for all sin, all pollution, which is the cause of all crime and sorrow here below, is excluded from this happy place. Then if sin cannot enter, it must be a place, where misery is unknown, and where crime can never rear its hideous form, and sweet indeed will it be to those, that have suffered and bore all the miseries of this sinful world. They there can rest in this land of purity, where God dwells, which is one of the strongest proofs, that heaven is a place of purity. For it is the habitation of the very source of purity; again, it is a place of great beauty and brilliance, and needs not the light of the sun to illuminate it; for the glory of God fills it with effulgent light more glorious than the meridian splendor of our noonday sun. The streets are to be paved with gold; the place is to be ornamented with gold and precious stones, which are designed to show the magnificence of this great habitation of the great God of the universe.

Yes Babylon in all its splendor is but a place of defilement to this glorious habitation of rest for those that love God. And it is a place of joy and happiness; for here is no sin, no death, no parting of the saints of God. But here are the approving smiles of God; here the saints can sing and pray through all eternity; here they can rest in this place of purity, joy and knowledge worlds without end, and with the poet sing,

There is an hour of peaceful rest
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a joy for souls distressed,

A balm for every wounded breast;
'Tis found above in heaven.

There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven,
When toss'd on life's tempestuous shoals
Where storms arise and ocean rolls
And all is dark but heaven.

There faith lifts up her cheerful eye
To brighter prospects given,
And views the tempest passing by
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven.

There fragrant flow'rs immortal bloom
And joys supreme are given,
The joys divine disperse the gloom,
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn of heaven.

But it is also declared in the word of God, that if we will not obey the councils of God, that we are to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone, prepared for the devil and his angels; so that we see there is a place prepared by God for all the disobedient and ungodly. And the word of divine inspiration teaches, that it is a place where the soul must be in the most awful anguish imaginable, and this is represented under the figure of weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, which is expressive of great torment and pain.

And awful indeed must be the condition of that soul, that falls under the wrath of God, and comes into this lake of fire and brimstone, which is the abode of the fearful, unbelieving, abominable, whoremonger, sorcerer, idolater, and all liars. Then these are the classes, that compose the regions of dark despair; these are those that fall under the penalty of God's just law, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up before the throne of God day and night forever and ever.

There, no doubt, they wail and cry, oh if I could but live my time over, how careful I would be to live as God has directed me in his holy word! How careful would I be, to shun all the places of sin and crime, those hells on earth, and go weekly to the place, where the saints of God do meet to sing and pray! But alas it is now too late and I am in this awful burning, where I must suffer for all the deeds done in the body.

Now my dear friends, it remains with you to choose which place you will; choose the joys of heaven or the torments of hell. If you love your God, and serve him faithful, you will enjoy God and his kingdom of purity and joy, to sing endless praises on high with all the redeemed. But if you will still persist in your way of sin and open rebellion, you will have to dwell in that awful place, where the fire is not quenched, and where the worm dieth not. Oh, war not against the Most High; for he will bring you down, lower than the dust, into the habitation, prepared for the devil and his angels.

CEPHAS.

FOR THE VISITER.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

This, my loving brethren and sisters in the Lord, is a subject of great weight and much importance. Then let us seriously consider the matter, and examine ourselves, whether this be our motto, rule and order, that we profess to be governed by. If so, then well and good; for verily then the promise is to us. Yea if we observe the above command, and live in obedience to our Lord and Master in all his requirements, we then at the evening of age, or at the decline of life with a clear conscience can commend ourselves unto the kind protection of our heavenly Fa-

ther, who will be pleased to receive us home to glory.

But on the other hand, Oh, I fear, I fear; there are many of us that fall short. Can we, my dear brethren, say with clear conscience, I love my neighbor as myself, and at the same time work and manage to our own advantage or speak evil of our brethren & friends? I answer no. Then, O then take warning by the word of God, "Do unto others as you would wish them to do unto you." Recollect, "the words that I speak, they are spirit and they are truth,' yes "sharper than any two edged sword &c."

The main reason why I have undertaken to drop these few lines is, to impress upon the minds of my brethren, as well as myself, of being more careful and more watchful not to fall into such awful measures. Do we not sometimes brethren, when trading and dealing with others, turn and twist and work as much as possible to come out a little best if any difference. And not only this, we are so apt when we have aught against some brother or other, to go and tell it to others, yes first tell it to others and try to make our side appear a little best and sometimes will not stop here, but we will suffer the world to get wind of it. This verily is sometimes the case, and O how evidently wrong! (Oh let us examine the word of God and it will teach us how to proceed!) Such a course of procedure is in direct opposition to the most holy and divine will of our heavenly Father.

Then dear brethren in the Lord, let us enter into a close examination of ourselves, and if we find ourselves guilty in the least, O then let us repent of the same. Arouse up, my brethren, let us wake up out of our lukewarm and slumbering condition.

Our glorious Lord will soon appear, the time is near at hand; lift up your eyes ye sons and daughters of Adam, behold your Saviour coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Can we rejoice in the same, or do we desire the rocks and mountains to fall on us and hide us from the face of the earth? Then stop, pause, ponder and think, "Shall I be able to stand?" O dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, let us watch unto prayer that we may be one in mind, so that we may all go hand in hand together, rejoicing in the work of the Lord, so that when the Lord shall come, we may be ready. May the Lord be with us and help us.

* * *

VALUE OF THE BIBLE

in reference to the present life.

If it be certain—certain on the confession of its enemies— that a pure and high morality is to be gathered only from the pages of the Bible, what an advantage is there in the possession of the Scriptures, even if death were the termination of human existence. Take away the Bible from a nation, so that there should no longer be the exhibition and inculcation of its precepts, and there would be a gradual, yea, and a rapid, introduction of false principles and spurious theories, which would pave the way for a total degeneracy of manners. You would quickly find that honesty & integrity were not held in their former repute, but had given place to fraud and extortion; that there was an universal setting up of the idol of selfishness, before which all that is generous, and disinterested, and philanthropic, would be forced to do homage; that there was attached little or none of that sacredness to domestic relationship which had here-

tofore been the chief charm of families; and that there was departing from our institutions all that is glorious in liberty, and from our firesides all that gives them their attractiveness. Whatever had been introduced and matured by the operations of Christianity, would, in process of time, decay and disappear, were those operations suspended; and since we can confidently trace to the influence of true religion, our advancement in all that concerns the public security, and the private tranquility; we can with equal confidence affirm our speedy relapse, if these influences were suddenly withdrawn. *B. T.*

THE HISTORY OF THE BRETHREN.

We have been endeavoring these twenty five years to collect materials for this history, at first merely for our own satisfaction, and afterwards finding it also useful for others, we felt inclined to make our collection the property of the brotherhood at large, especially for the benefit of our children. Being more and more strongly impressed by a sense of duty to do so, we finally undertook the present publication with a special view to this object, and commenced in the article, entitled, "*The church in the wilderness*," what we deemed necessary as an introduction to the particular history in view, in order to prove the continued existence of an apostolical church from the beginning of the Gospel up to our time.

These investigations about the "church in the wilderness" we pursued in the former volumes, and the reader will find in last volume (III. page 21.) that we then were come so far down through the first seventeen centuries of the Christian era, as to be ready to pass on to the origin and history of our own fraternity. In the german part of the July-No. (page 67. &c.) we gave an article sent us by our dear brother THEOPHILUS, entitled, "*Something about the first origin and progress of the fraternity of German Baptists*," and in the english part of August-No. (page 57.) we inserted under the caption, "*What other people say of our brethren?*" the little sketch given by MORGAN EDWARDS in his "Materials toward a history of American Baptists. 1770."

But here we paused, not a little disappointing many of our readers, who were looking forward to this part of the history of the church in the wilderness as the most interesting to them. However we had been disappointed before them. Wishing to give a true, authentic and impartial account of the rise & progress of our fraternity, and being made aware of the existence of many more documents and materials, as we had in possession, we were in hopes, that our dear brethren, who possessed any ancient manuscripts, pamphlets or books, which might furnish any material for such a history, would feel disposed to communicate them to us. We were also in hopes, that we might be enabled to pay a visit to our most ancient churches ere this, with a view to the same object of searching after and rescuing from oblivion, whatever might be extant worthy of preservation in the past, and especially the early history of our fraternity.

We repeat, that we were disappointed in these our expectations thus far. Though we must gratefully acknowledge, that a few brethren have favored our design, and communicated manuscripts & books, from which we did or at least hoped to derive valuable information; yet we believe, many manuscript-letters of breth-

ren that lived a hundred or more years ago, many notices of the brethren, scattered in old books and pamphlets, and other materials of a history, as we contemplate, might be found here and there, if those who are in possession of them, were willing to co-operate with us, and furnish us, whatever might be worthy of preservation, or might answer a good purpose.

The main difficulty is, that those possessing such ancient papers &c. have inherited them from their ancestors, consequently prize them as family-relics, and do not wish to dispose of them for love or money, just as we do, having some manuscript-writings of our grandfather &c. But yet, what good will they do us or any body else, if we keep them locked up? Are we not acting the miser's part, who locks up his treasures, deriving no benefit from them himself, nor allowing others to enjoy and make use of them? Will not moths & vermin eventually eat them up, or fire destroy them? Or if they escape these accidents, what will those, in whose possession they may come after our decease, do with them, if they do not understand the language, in which they were written? In a word, will they not sooner or later be utterly lost, if we do not give them up, so that what-ever may be useful or beneficial to ourselves, our children and mankind, can be preserved?

These questions we present in love & seriousness to all those, whom it may concern, and we fondly hope they will reflect on them, and then act as self-denying love will dictate. If they do not wish to part with the original manuscripts, let them send us true, faithful copies; or if they cannot do that, let us have the loan of the originals for a limited time, in which case we will engage to take care of them as well, as they could do in their own house, and return them in due time, and (unavoidable accidents excepted) in the same condition, in which we received them.

Our main object is, to make the *earlier* history of our brotherhood as complete as possible, and not to commence it, until we are fully prepared. For the later, and especially for the latest part (our own times) of this history we have perhaps as many materials as any brother living, yet experience has taught us, that this part is to be left over to those who may come after us, when all our predilections and prejudices and partialities have been buried with us. This we mention purposely, to set at rest the fears of brethren, that our proposed history might become a cause of contention and dissatisfaction.

With regard to the *earlier* history however there can exist no such fears, and we trust by the help of God to be enabled to give it faithfully, impartially and in love. But the question may be asked, What good will it do? What is its use? If we be allowed to speak from our experience, we would answer, in the language of the apostle, "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God,' and, we may add, the institutions and ordinances of the Gospel in their utmost purity and simplicity, uncontaminated with any human traditions; which is made evident by their history.

Secondly, because that history shows, how they kept house with those great trusts, committed to them, and how they transmitted them to their successors.

Thirdly, because that history shows, that though fallible and subject to error, as even children of God are individually and collectively, God in his special providence has always mercifully watched over our fraternity for good, has preserved us in a singular manner from errors and heresies as a body, and,

though there occurred sometimes lamentable signs of decay and lifelessness, of a stand still, or even of a falling away in one or the other part of the body, yet God has overruled all these so that upon the whole we may perceive by an eye of faith in the history of the past a slow but constant, a real and not an imaginary *progress*.

If to some this progress seemed too slow or no progress at all;—if they found fault with their brethren for not moving faster, and not taking that nearer and better way, which they thought they had found;—if they finally left them, and went ahead with those few, that were willing to follow them;—history tells us, what became of them, that a slow progress is better than a swift destruction, and that it is the part of a wise shepherd to regulate his steps so, that even the lame, the weak and tender lambs of the flock may be enabled to follow him.

In short, we do not and cannot know the brethren rightly without knowing more or less of their history. Hence we are strangers to the world around us, yea even to our very neighbors, just as much as a man who comes into a neighborhood, where he never was before. Though we see him, and take notice of his person; see him walk and see him work, and hear him talk, and talk well, yet if he would not tell us something of the history of his former life, where he is from, who his parents and connections were, and what he followed before, &c. we would not only continue to look upon him as a stranger, but even mistrust him, fearing, and not without cause, that something about him was wrong, whatever his present conduct might show forth to the contrary.

On the other hand it is one of our clearest impressions, established by long experience, that if we, our children and our friends are once by the grace of God so far enlightened, as to see the kingdom of God, where the *word and Spirit of God alone* rules, and all that is in MAN submits, and more still, if we by the same grace have been born of water and of the spirit, and thus entered that kingdom with an eye single and a heart subdued to the will and word of God,—then the more we know of our brotherhood, the more we learn of their views and principles, the better acquainted we become with their history and general practice, and even with their weaknesses, the more satisfied we will be with their practice, the more contented with the order of things in unison with the word of God, the more united in sentiment, the more confident and trustful in our brotherly love and affection, and the more willing for a progress hand in hand with our brethren in the right direction, till we all shall land on Canaan's happy shore, and see eye to eye all those that have gone the same way before us.

Now if such an object in view, dearest brethren, meets your approbation, then let this my appeal to you for help and co-operation not be in vain. Let each and all who can, contribute their mite, so that our children may have a true account and history of our brotherhood, and may transmit it to their children's children, after our dust has been commingled with the dust of our forefathers.

We will say no more for the present, but this, that in all communications of this kind we must give the full name of the writer, as a witness to the facts stated, and that the facts we wish to learn, are such, as will be elicited by the following questions:

1. About what time was your church established?—By whom? Whence did

the first members come? Who was the first overseer or teacher?— Who his successors? When was your district subdivided?

2. What remarkable times of refreshment took place in the church in days gone by? How did they originate? Who the visible instruments?

3. What calamity happened to the church? What was the cause? How was it overcome? &c. &c.

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THE MOST ANCIENT DOCUMENT OF THE HISTORY OF OUR FRATERNITY.

This document is dated July 1713, and consequently over 140 years old. It was published in SCHWARZENAU in GERMANY only about 5 years after the *first* congregation was organized after the pattern of the primitive and apostolic church, which, as we have seen already, has according to the promise of our blessed Saviour continued uninterruptedly to exist ever since, notwithstanding all that earth and hell with their power combined could do against it. We call this document the most ancient, which we possess, not only in manuscript, but in print, as published at the time, because we are not aware of any one more ancient to be extant, and because it is so nearly as old as our fraternity itself, as a distinct, younger branch of the great body, the church of Christ.

We call this ancient publication a document, because we believe it contains the simple views and sentiments not of an individual only, but of the whole body then existing, and because it serves as an evidence, by which every candid and impartial seeker after truth can best ascertain, whether this younger branch has really grown out of the true and living vine, even Christ, or not? Rom. viii. 9. Whether this body was born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God? John i. 13. *) Whether the seed, from which that little branch sprung up, was not as really the *word of God*, †) preached by Christ and his apostles, as it was that from which the very first churches sprang? And whether that word of God was not accompanied in them with the same living and life-giving power of the Spirit of God, as even in the primitive Christians.

The occasion to this document was, as we are informed in the preface to another book, this: that some learned men attacked them, and tried by sharp disputations and subtile questions to bring them in confusion. Such questions were those, that were proposed in the following treatise, and answered in great simplicity by the brethren.

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*) Here we learn by words of divine inspiration, that there are only four ways, neither more nor less by which individual worshippers or churches are brought into existence, and by only one of these four ways a true Christian, and a true church of Christ can be born. And by this text alone we could easily distinguish all false churches from the true church. For if the ranks of a church are filled up by none or almost none but the natural children of members, it is a church born of blood, and not of God. If the will of the flesh has free course in a church, so that members can swear, get drunk, fight, and follow all the fashions of the world, unchecked, we may safely conclude, that it is not of God. And if a church is built, gathered, converted and spread by the exertions of man, ruled by man, and bearing the name of a man, we may at once set it down, as a church after the will of man, but not of God. Reader, reflect upon this, and see where you are!

†) Luke viii. 11. "*The seed is the word of God.*"

The full title of this treatise is:

Eberhard Ludwig Gruber's ground-searching questions, which were proposed to those NEW BAPTISTS *in Witgenstein, for them specially to answer.*

Together with

annexed brief and simple answers upon them, formerly given out in writing by an upright member of the church in Witgenstein, and now upon the request of many put in public print.

Lancaster:

Printed for the publisher by John Bear. 1822.

(Whether this was the only edition published in this country, cannot be ascertained, but in the preface already mentioned it is stated, that it was first published in *Schwarzenau, Germany,* sometime about 1713. and from this same preface it may be presumed, another edition was issued anno 1774.

All we would ask of the dear reader, whosoever he be, is that he would slowly read and contemplate each question and answer, and when done, to consider, what other and better answer he could give on the question according to the word of God. And if he should find, that the answer given here, is the best that could be given, unless we leave the living fountain of the word, and seek an answer in the broken cisterns of human opinion, then let him give the glory to God, and abide by the truth as it is in Jesus, whatever the world, our own fleshly, carnal reason and he, that is a liar from the beginning, may have to object against it. For certainly the world and all worldly reason and argument will pass away, but the word of God abideth forever.

* * *

In God beloved friends and fellow-pilgrims.

There are many until now, who desire to have a somewhat clearer understanding and information of your new baptism and church, because that what has been said or even written of it here and there, has left them yet in much uncertainty. Now in order to apprehend your mind more fully and exactly hereupon, and to be put beyond all further doubting on the subject, it is our desire to propose to you now the following open-hearted questions, upon which we expect soon your distinct and sincere answers.

Beloved friends.

Inasmuch as you have asked in love for information, and also the apostle Peter teaches believers, 1 Pet. iii. 15. to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, we could not pass by, but have answered quite briefly, in love and sincerity, in assurance of faith and in great simplicity those questions proposed, and would now leave them to your consideration before God.

QUERY 1. Whether they were not of the opinion, that for more than a thousand years there had been no true, genuine baptism, and consequently no true church on earth?

ANSWER. We hold and believe, that God had always his church, which did observe the true baptism and ordinances, but which was always hidden to the unbelieving, and also sometimes consisted only in few members, yet the gates of hell could never prevail against the church of our Lord Jesus; yea it can be proven also from history, that God at all times had caused his order to be revealed to the unbelieving as a testimony.

QU. 2. Whether the church of God at no time and in no manner whatever could exist in any members without the primitive and outward ordinance of baptism, as peradventure the Israelitic church subsisted for a considerable time

in the wilderness without circumcision according to Josh. v. 5–7.

Answ. The church of Christ is not ordered otherwise by the true master-builder Jesus Christ, than that she is to observe his baptism and ordinances, yea Christ has ordered all things very well in his congregation or church by apostles and teachers, established sufficiently by signs and wonders, and it is therefore incontrovertible, that there never could have been a church or congregation of Christ without baptism and ordinances, as he has truly instituted them. But that there should have been souls, who had been drawn in secret to the church of Christ, we would not deny; but whether they have obeyed and confessed Christ publicly, or whether they loved the honor of the world more than the honor of God, we will not pretend to decide.

As to the Israelitic church it is clear, that the children in the wilderness had to bear the reproach of Egypt, and also the misdeeds of their fathers. But as soon as they came to the promised land, and before they could take the city of JERICHO, they all had to be first circumcised, and God said unto Joshua, (v. 9.) "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." Then they were allowed to keep the pass-over, but not before, which has been also a figure upon us. For as long as we walk in the wilderness and great disorder & uncertainty, though we should have gone out of Egypt, and be redeemed from gross sins by the mighty hand of God, yet we could not enter into the house of God, and break the bread of communion of Jesus and his members, but God requires also of us, that we should be baptized, and will require it though in secret of every one, if men would only hearken to the inward voice, and obey with self-denial.

Qu. 3. Whether the church of God here on earth at such times, when the true order of baptism was no longer observed, had ceased entirely?

Answ. If the true order of baptism had ever ceased, then would also of course the church of Christ have ceased, and though if there had been souls, who had lamented the great downfall here and there, they could not have been called a church. But since we believe, and it also might be proven from ancient history, that the primitive baptism has never ceased according to the ordinance of Christ, consequently also the church has never ceased, and should there have been but a few.

Qu. 4. How they would undertake to bring such an idea in correspondence with the promise of Christ, Matt. xvi. 18. "that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church," and Matt. xxviii. 20. "that he will be with them always even unto the end of the world."

Answ. This is already answered, because we believe, that the gates of hell have NOT prevailed against the church of Christ, but that she has remained and will remain unto the end of the world.

Qu. 5. What do you then hold about those undoubted witnesses of truth after godliness, who have yet in such times, from century to century, made their appearance, and whether they were no real members of Christ, and of his church or true body, in the essence of the spirit united merely because they were not baptized according to the primitive order?

Answ. Christ says, Matt. vii. "that we should know the trees by their fruits." Now since we believe, that writing fine books, or even prophesying are not just those fruits, by which we should know a good Christian alone; therefore we cannot take a man for a christian by

them. Yet we would judge no man, and since we did not know these men in their life-time, we leave them stand to their God, and all their writing or even prophesying cannot make us suspicious of the Gospel of Jesus. Nay, we can not for their prophesying alone take them for the church of Christ, if they have not been walking in the doctrine of Jesus, in baptism and the other ordinances, as he has commanded.

Qu. 6 Whether they were not of the opinion, that the ceremony of baptism, which had been so long neglected, should be by all means established again in the last times, and with what reason? Or whether an allwise God had not rather permitted this ceremony to fall into decay, as not belonging to the essence of Christianity, for the purpose that he would put away the same entirely, like circumcision in the old covenant, as yet imperfect, and not making perfect, and to introduce a new ceremony and dispensation of the pure spirit for those that are his, as all prophetic promises seem to imply?

Ans. We are of opinion, and believe, as the apostle writes, Heb. vii. 12. "that as long as the priesthood is not changed, there can be of necessity no change of the law." For as long as the Levitical priesthood stood, so long no one was allowed to do away the law or circumcision, without incurring a great penalty and displeasure of God. But when Christ was come, he as the everlasting Highpriest and Son of God has introduced a law of life, and disannulled the first, because it was too weak, and could not make perfect; he, having obtained eternal redemption for us, has revealed the way into the most holy place, and given none but laws of life, and established his will or testament with his blood. Therefore we believe and confess, that if an angel from heaven would come to reveal to us another or better Gospel, even such an angel would have to be accursed according to the testimony of Paul. Gal. i. 8. Consequently we believe, that the doctrine of our crucified Jesus is to be observed, until he himself shall come again, "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," according to Paul's testimony. 2 Thess. i. 8. For which reason then the doctrine of Jesus is by all means to be observed by the believers even in these days; but to the unbelievers nothing is commanded (but to repent).

To be continued.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOSPEL-VISITER.

We have postponed the issue of this present No. (the first of a new volume) partly from necessity, as our printers were engaged at reprinting the first 5 No's of last Vol. in order to furnish complete volumes to those who did and may yet desire them, and partly from a desire to hear first from all our respected subscribers and friends, so as to ascertain at once the probable number of copies, that would be wanted of this new volume, and to avoid thereby the trouble and loss of either printing too many, and having them on hand, not knowing what to do with them, or printing too few, so that we are not able to supply those that come in late, with the first No's.

But it seems, that many of our dear readers are not aware of the difficulties arising to publishers and printers from the uncertainty in this respect, and so we are again compelled to issue this

No, and may happen to send it to some, who do not wish to have it. In this case, and to avoid greater disappointment and loss, we wish and request those who receive this No. and do not want it, to tell the Postmaster, at whose office they received it, to send it immediately back to us, as it is their duty to do.

From those, who have not already ordered and paid for this volume, we expect also to hear, before we issue the next No., and in order to give them a little more time we will not issue July-No. until the August-No. is also printed, so that we may send out the two No's at once and together.

New subscribers, or any others wishing for them, we will furnish the three first volumes for two Dollars, as long as we are able, or until our small stock is exhausted.

* * *

Caution.

We have received lately several counterfeit-bills, of which one only ($5,00) we could send back with an assurance from whence it came, and expect it to be refunded, inasmuch as the brother expressed himself to that effect, who had passed it upon us unawares.

Another counterfeit-bill of five Dollars on the City Bank of Hartford (Connecticut), and one of two Dollars on Lancaster Bank (Pennsylvania) came quite lately to hand, and having neglected to mark them, we have to lose that amount, unless those that know they sent us such a bill, will of their own accord indemnify us.

A bill of one Dollar on the commercial Bank of New-Jersey, which is also worthless, was given at the late yearly meeting to some brother, who acted as our Agent, for Books or minutes.

Now we believe all this happened to our brethren not wilfully or knowingly, but through ignorance or by mistake, as it happened to ourselves, that we took them at once for good. We shall try to be more careful for the future, taking a note of every bill so as to know from whence it came, and we hope our brethren and subscribers will be equally careful, to have those bills examined, which they receive, and particularly those, which they intend to send us by mail.

OBITUARY.

Died— Of consumption, at her residence near Gambier, Knox county Ohio, March the 20th 1854, Sister SUSAN BOSTETTER in the 62d year of her age. She has been a consistent member of the German Baptist Denomination for the last 37 years, and lived a pious and devoted life.

In her death the church has lost a worthy and devoted member, her husband a loving and kind companion, and her children, (8 in number) a tender and affectionate mother. But their loss is her eternal gain.

The funeral discourse was preached by A. Leedy from 2 Tim. iv. 7. 8. "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*, &c." Her remains were then taken, followed by weeping friends, and laid away in the cold and dreary tomb, there to await the clangor of Gabriel's trump; then to come forth, clothed in celestial and eternal beauty and loveliness, to dwell forever at God's right hand.

Brethren, may you and I by the assisting grace of God, so act and live here, that in the morning of eternity we may meet her with the blood-washed throng in that happy clime, where

Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and fear'd no more.

D. B.

THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER,

VOL. II. July 1854. NO. 2.

For the Visiter.

HOW SHALL THE PROPHECIES BE FULFILLED?

This is truly an *interesting* question, which every one of us, that is, we and all our readers, together with many thousand other readers of the Bible would like to see answered in a satisfactory manner. Perhaps we have tried, each one of us, to form some idea, how & in what manner the many awful as well as glorious prophecies yet unfulfilled, should come to pass, or rather, how the prophecies should be understood, yet our ideas were vague, faint and contradictory, and consequently far from being satisfactory. Yet these very efforts show and prove the interest we take in the prophecies. Many have undertaken the task to explain and point out an answer to our present query, and their books have been read and studied by thousand; but old and new commentators disagree among themselves, and when we are done reading, our mind is still not satisfied, and the question, after reading or hearing so many different opinions, is still gaining in interest, "*How shall the prophecies be fulfilled?*"

This is also a *necessary* question. The Jews believed, what Moses and the prophets had said about the Messiah's coming;—they had no doubt, but those prophecies concerning him and the blessings he would bring with him, would certainly be fulfilled;—when the time was at hand, foretold by the prophets, they looked earnestly for his appearance. Yea so earnestly did they look for him, that impostors like THEUDAS and JUDAS, boasting to be somebody, drew many people after them; Acts v. 36. 37. JOHN *the baptist* was asked again and again, Whether he was not Christ? Whether he was not that prophet, (that should come according to Moses' prophecy?) John i. 20—22. &c. and it was of false Messiahs undoubtedly, that Christ spoke, John x. 8. "All that ever came before me, are thieves and robbers." Yet, when the true Messiah came, by not duly considering the question before us, the Jews rejected him, reviled him as an impostor, crucified him, and thus as a nation deprived themselves not only of all the blessings of the Gospel and its glorious salvation, but incurred that curse of blindness and dispersion with all its attendant evils, for these 1800 years past. Need we say more of the necessity of the question, How shall the prophecies be fulfilled?—Do we not see by the example of the Jews, that our present and eternal salvation is depending upon a proper consideration of this question?

But is it not also a *difficult* question?—Can we or any uninspired man undertake to answer this question, seeing that so many have tried to do so, and have failed?—Can we expect or presume to have more light on the subject than they?—When divinely inspired, holy men of God had to say of themselves, "*For we know in part, and prophesy in part;*" dare we pretend *to know in full*, and answer in full, the question before us?—No, no, this would be a vain, presumptuous and impossible undertaking. Neither had we any such inten-

tion. Nor could our readers reasonably expect, that in a short article for the Visitor we should set forth in order, one by one, the many prophecies, contained in the holy scriptures, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, that are yet to be fulfilled, either wholly or in part. Even this would be a difficult and heavy task, which would fill a volume not less than the New-Testament, if we were merely to give the words of inspired prophecy, without note or comment. But were we to add to each such prophecy in particular our views or those of others, how they would probably be fulfilled, the task would be endless and profitless.

However we shall attempt no such thing, either to gratify our own vanity, or the curiosity of others. But we will humbly sit down at the feet of Jesus, and his prophets and apostles, and try to learn the solution of our present question from them, in order to avoid the terrible mistake the Jews made with regard to the prophecies fulfilled eighteen hundred years ago. For this purpose let us open "the little book," which John "took out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in his mouth sweet as honey, and as soon as he had eaten it, his belly was bitter." And so we will find it too, if we do not only superficially look at & read, but also deeply reflect and realize, (this, methinks, is meant by eating) its contents.

Now in opening this little book, by which the reader will understand with me the book of revelations given unto John by the angel (see Rev. i. 1.) we find in chap. x. 7. "*But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*" The latter clause makes it as plain as possible, what is meant by "the mystery of God," namely those prophecies, which were declared to and by the prophets, and if we look closely at the word, we have here an inspired, infallible answer to our question, How shall the prophecies be fulfilled? The answer is, "As *he (God) hath declared to his servants the prophets.*"

But in order to realize this divine answer more fully, let us take notice

1. That the mystery of God is to be finished; or in other words, that the prophecies are to be *completely* fulfilled. For nothing can be considered as finished, until it is complete; nor can any thing be complete before it is finished

2 Again, let us take notice, that in order the mystery of God may be finished, ALL he hath declared to any prophet, and to ALL the prophets, in a word, all the prophecies are to be completely fulfilled; not only the glorious promises, not only the gladsome tidings of a blissful future, of a reign of peace and glory, but also the dreadful threatenings, the awful messages of coming evil;—not only that which is sweet in the mouth, but also that which is bitter in the belly.

And here let me tell you, dear reader, that we ought to take warning from the sad example of the Jews, and, while we rejoice in the bright side of the prophecies, not to overlook the dark side of them; neither let us like them form our ideas of things future by a partial view of the prophecies according to our own natural desires and feelings, which will most certainly lead us astray, but let us take a full view of them, of the whole of them, and we will be safe in the greatest danger, and have light in the darkest night.

3. We are taught in this divine declaration, in what manner the prophecies

shall be fulfilled; that they shall be accomplished *in like manner*, mark! "As God hath declared to his servants the prophets." Here we learn how necessary it is to pay attention to the least word as well as the greatest; and if we overlook even the least, we may pass by something of very great import. That the little word "As" signifies *in like manner*, we do not only learn from the dictionary, but the word of God proves it beyond contradiction. If the golden rule of the Gospel, "*Do to others*, AS *you would wish to be done by*," cannot be understood otherwise, but that we are to act towards others *in like manner* as we would wish others to act towards us; —and if our prayer to God, "*Forgive us our debts*, AS *we forgive our debtors*," can have no other meaning, but that we ask to be treated of God in regard to our sins, *in like manner* as we treat those who sin against us;—(what a prayer this in the mouth of the unforgiving sinner!—)it is evident, that in the text under consideration we are expressly told, *how* and *in what manner* the prophecies shall be fulfilled.

Now after God himself pointing us to his servants, the prophets, to tell us how and in what manner their prophecies are to be fulfilled, would it not be foolishness to look elsewhere for an explanation of the "mystery of God," or for an answer to our question?—And if men still are so foolish, do we wonder why they are led so far astray, and finally perish?—And if we are assured that by keeping "the word of his patience, (and the word of his prophecy,) we shall also be kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth;" Rev. iii. 10. Oh how careful should we be in our reading, understanding, explaining and observing the word of God, so that we may be saved!

4. *All the prophecies shall be fulfilled in their proper time and season.* From the words of God now under consideration we learn also this; for there it is said expressly, that *in the days* of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." There was a prophecy given, and a time set to the antediluvian world, when the Lord said unto NOAH, "Yet his (mankind's) days shall be *an hundred and twenty years*;" —and the prophecy was completely fulfilled in the terrible flood that destroyed the world, though those days were shortened for the elect's sake, and these were saved in the ark. Again there was a prophecy given, and a time set unto ABRAHAM, when the Lord said unto him, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them *Four hundred years*." Gen. xv. 13. This was completely fulfilled, when God delivered the children of ISRAEL from bondage, and led them out of Egypt by his servant MOSES, through whom he also gave them *the law*. Of this prophesied JACOB already, and said, how long it would last, (namely the dispensation of the law,) when he said, "Until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" Gen. xlix. 10. And from the fulfillment of this prophecy, Christ's first appearance on earth, and being "the end of the law," we know now, that the dispensation of the law lasted about 1500 years, and thus the mystery of God (in the law) was finished and fulfilled.

We live now in the time of the Gospel-dispensation; but the angel, whom John saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, assures us in the most solemn manner, swearing by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven,

and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, *that there should be time* (Gospel-time) *no longer*;—*that the mystery of God* (in the Gospel) *should be finished*, and consequently that the Gospel-dispensation should come to an end also here on earth, that is, be completed, finished, perfected and glorified by the first resurrection, of which we read, Rev. xx. 4—6. and thus the true Gospel-church, and the true Gospel-ministers being translated to the New-Jerusalem above, and none but the foolish virgins remaining behind, we ask, how should the Gospel-dispensation be continued on earth after the first resurrection?

Now, beloved, if these things are so; —if it is true, what our Saviour foretold of his second coming, that "they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage: *and the door was shut*; Matt. xxv. 10. and that they who came afterward, cried in vain, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" ib. 11.—if it is true, what he said that is holy, he that is true, "that he hath the key of David, that he openeth, and no man shutteth, *and shutteth, and no man openeth*;" Rev iii. 7. and that consequently we have great reason to look for a time, when that open door now set before us, will be closed, and no man, no prayer, no tears, will open it, yea, even the door to the ark of the New-Testament, the Gospel-door;—oh then, how important, how immensely important will it be for all, who hear the Gospel's joyful sound, Now to accept the invitation, Now to prepare, Now to enter in at the straight gate, while it is open, for fear to-morrow it might be too late, and certainly all the prophecies, and these last mentioned too, will be fulfilled in their appointed time and season, though "no man knoweth that time." Matt. xxiv. 36.

5. But if there is no time specified, we still have a guide in this, *that all the prophecies will be fulfilled in their due order*.

To illustrate this, let us remember, that Moses prophesied and predicted a number of plagues, which were to come upon Egypt, and each prediction was fulfilled in the same order, as it was given. No other plague came, till the one before had ceased. So likewise we read, Rev. xv. 1. of seven angels having the seven last plagues, and in the following chapter we find, how the first angel poured out his vial upon the earth, the second upon the sea, &c. Now by the terms first, second, third &c. it is evident, that these seven plagues will come in that same order, and that we need not look for the sixth or seventh plague, until we are sure, that the first five have actually come to pass. And if we were to suppose, that the present war in TURKEY was really in consequence of the sixth vial poured out upon the great river Euphrates, (Rev. xvi. 12.) which is indeed the chief river in *Asiatic Turkey*, and the drying up of its waters might represent the drying up of the resources of that power, caused by the present war, and not only by its enemy, RUSSIA, but also by its allies, ENGLAND and FRANCE &c. that supposition would as yet have no real foundation, unless we could also point out, where the other five vials had found their fulfillment.

But again, supposing we could even do that;—suppose, we could make it appear, that the "seven vials of the wrath of God" or "the seven plagues" have been and will yet be fulfilled in those dreadful wars, and concomitant evils, which have been sustained by the OPPRESSED against their OPPRESSORS within the last eighty years, or will yet have to be sustained;—suppose, we could

show, that the *first* vial was poured upon our own land, AMERICA, and that the consequence was our revolutionary war, lasting seven years; that the *second* vial was poured out upon FRANCE, being represented by the ever-changing sea, and having sustained one bloody revolution after the other during the last 60 years;—that the *third* vial was emptied upon those smaller countries ITALY, SPAIN, PORTUGAL, HOLLAND, SWITZERLAND &c. &c. which all had taken part in the shedding of the blood of the saints;—that the *fourth* vial was poured out upon the SUN of intelligence, the seats of learning, and the whole literary world, by which men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God;—and that the *fifth* vial was poured out upon the seat of the beast, which, if we accept of the common interpretation, was evidently fulfilled, when the Pope had to leave his seat, and had to flee for his life, his kingdom being full of darkness, and he being an exile for some time, and dependant upon the charity, even of his American children, only a few years ago;—well, supposing all this to be correct, what would it prove?

Why, dear readers, all this will prove neither more nor less, than the awful truth, that our lot has fallen upon most perilous times;—that we have been living all the days of our life in an age, in which *the wrath of God* has been pouring out his righteous judgments upon the world, here, and there, and every where;—that though we were spared from the trials, privations and sufferings of our forefathers in the trying times of the *American* revolution, and have enjoyed political and religious liberty and prosperity in a manner unexampled by history, yet we have *not* been spared from that noisome and grievous sore, which fell upon the men which had the mark of the beast, (which in our opinion is, hearkening neither to the voice of conscience or reason, nor to that of the word and Spirit of God, but pursuing the course of nature, the gratification of animal propensities and beastly lusts, right or wrong, as far as possible, and calling this noisome thing—liberty;) and upon them, which worshipped his (the beast's) image," (which worship however they will be apt to call "the worship of God!)

But it is time to bring these remarks to a close. We had merely intended to show, how the prophecies in general would be fulfilled, without venturing into particulars for the present. Guided by the unerring word of God we have done so, as well as we were able, and have answered our question (whether satisfactory or not, let the reader judge.) as follows,

The prophecies shall be fulfilled

1. completely;
2. all and each;
3. in like manner as foretold;
4. in their appointed time and season; and
5. in their due order.

It is hoped, that by a proper attention to these particulars the reader of the prophecies will be enabled to avoid grievous mistakes, and to understand them, as far as it is necessary at this time. The greatest of all mistakes is this, to expect a very joyful event, such as the glorious appearance of the Saviour, the first resurrection, the conversion of the Jews, and the commencement of the Millennium, too soon, and not according to scripture. For upon such those plagues, those universal calamities, those terrible judgments, predicted by the prophets, which will have to be accomplished first, will fall unawares, and being disappointed in their hopes, they

will fall a prey to every delusion, yea they may be apt to fall into the hands of that greatest impostor, that "man of sin,—whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and *lying* wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved." 2 Thess. ii. 9. 10.

If any of our readers have other questions on this all-important subject, that may be profitably considered, our columns shall be open for them.

* * *

Communicated for the Visiter.

"Take heed that no man deceive you."

Matthew xxiv. 4.

Inasmuch as I am aware, that some of my dear brethren and sisters, are still opposed to using an assumed name; I will bring to their minds, that the Saviour himself saw proper to give some of his chosen ones, 'surnames' or names suited to their dispositions. Viz. Simon, 'Peter' or 'Cephas,' signifying a stone; and the two sons of Zebedee, 'Boanerges' which is, "the sons of thunder." See Mark iii. 16. 17. Perhaps, those who are opposed are not aware that each assumed name, has its particular signification.

As my signature indicates a "good counsellor," I thought it prudent to take the above text, as my aim is in this article to give good and wholesome advice, and a friendly warning based upon the word of God, to all my fellow travelers to an endless eternity; and especially to them, who are strangers to converting grace. In undertaking such an important task, I do feel the need of assistance from Him who is the dispenser of all profitable things, and consequently I will resign myself into his hands.

The words of our choice were spoken by the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, on a very important occasion; and perhaps never suited the times better, than at the present age. Do we not see the predictions verified, made by Jesus Christ in the following verse? "For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many." How many do we see upon their post, coming in the name of Christ, pretending to be sent of him, and seeming vigorously engaged in defending his cause; yet at the same time, their actions and their conduct show that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ?

Instead of teaching the word of God in its primitive purity, they teach and establish rules and ordinances entirely foreign to the words of Christ. Which I contend, is assuming the character of Christ's prophetic office for the sole purpose of frustrating his grand design in the salvation of man. For no sooner are commands established suited to the carnal and exalted minds of men, and become once popular among professors; then the commands of Christ are rejected, disregarded, and God's word entirely lost sight of. Whether this is not the case at present among the so-called Christians? and whether this grand destructive machine is not turned by the operative power of the Prince of darkness, I will leave every candid soul to answer for himself.

Admitting this to be the fact, O how necessary is it to pay a strict attention to the warning of the blessed Saviour, "Take heed that no man deceive you, for many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." It is evident, that great deceptions will be carried on towards the end of time, by the following words: "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall

show signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

By surveying the world in its present condition, with a spiritual eye, we can see these things verified: and what else can we expect now, but that the end of all things is at hand. O then let us prepare for death, for eternity, and for the judgment to come! That we may be found worthy to escape all those things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

A question might be asked, How shall we know whether we are in a state of self-deception or not? If we are operated by the Spirit of God, and converted by the converting means from heaven, our conversion is of God; and we need not fear, but may rest assured that we are the adopted children of God. Now to expose self-deception in its various forms, and in its true light, would require too much space in the Visiter. I will merely treat of a few, and the principal ones too, by which thousands and tens of thousands are deceived.

We know it has become quite fashionable to the world, to go to meeting and hear persons preach, and is often the case, when the speaker has a good voice, an affecting and fluent delivery and becomes excited in his discourse, the hearer becomes influenced by that man, more than by the word he preaches; and as it is very popular at the present age to be a professor, not much regarded whether he is a possessor; he straightway joins that church, or rather that man, without once inquiring whether he taught the word in its primitive purity, nor whether he acts upon the principles of Christ. Now this is no conversion at all and that man is "born of man."

Others go a little farther, and according to the custom of the day, when the mourners-bench is set out for them, and urged on by the speaker with great vehemence and almost compelled to come forward; they at last for fear or overpowering excitement, become themselves so much excited, that they fall down on their knees, often unconscious what they are doing. For having now received of the contents of the golden cup, held forth to them, they become so spiritually intoxicated, that they utter cries and lamentations to an alarming extent.

After a while the speaker comforts them with a false hope; speaking peace to their souls, saying, you are now converted and have the love of God shed abroad in your hearts. Crying with the false prophets of old, "Peace, when there is no peace." All is well now, if the heart be good, all is right; we need not be so particular in keeping this and that commandment. If we have the baptism of the Holy Spirit we have no need of water-baptism, for it is only an external ordinance, and water can never wash away sins; nor can feetwashing cleanse us, for it was only an act of kindness and never intended for a commandment, and so on.

Such is the language of the deceiving spirits, thus setting at nought the commands of God by their traditions. These are some of the greatest deceptions that the devil, the adversary of souls, ever could devise against man's everlasting happiness. For when a man once gets to believe himself converted or a Christian, he becomes self-righteous and his case is a hopeless one in the extreme. Well might the Saviour have said, "Take heed that no man deceive you."

There is another class of false prophets of whom the Saviour warns us, "which come in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Such

ones are more likely to deceive the humble, honest, sincere and penitent souls. They are not so easily distinguished from the true prophets as the other class. They, by all appearance, come in an humble, penitent, innocent and defenceless appearance. But as a token of discernment, He adds, "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

I will now briefly state, in what manner we have to detect deception. There is one infallible rule, by which we can discern every kind of deception, and that is by squaring and comparing every thing with the word of God. Anything however small it may appear, however light man make of it, that does not comport with that eternal word, by which we all once have to be judged, has a tendency to deceive. If we hear a person preach, let us compare it with the word of God. If it agrees with the same, it is well; if it disagrees, he is a deceiving spirit; though he could speak like an angel.

And we need not marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore it is no great thing, if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.—Those who are under a spirit of self-deception appear often very serious, earnest, prayerful, and by just observing their moral conduct, you might think them to be christians.

And I truly must believe, that a soul can be so far deluded, that he actually believes to do God's service, whilst persecuting the church of God; (recollect the case of Paul!) and he may live & die in a state of self-deception; and according to the word of God arrive at the gate of heaven, and justify his conduct at the bar of God; but he will hear the reply of the Judge, "Depart from me you worker of iniquity; I never knew you." Awful sentence!

Hence the important admonition, "Take heed that no man deceive you." O my dear friends, are ye builders for eternity? Lay a good foundation; see well to it how you build. Yes, every soul is a builder for eternity. Remember the tree that thou plantest, O immortal! of its fruit thou shalt reap in eternity.

In order that we may reap eternal happiness, we must be born again, and the word of God must be the seed to that new birth, with a strict obedience to all the commands of the Son of God, together with a full resignation to the whole will of God in every respect, before we have any reason to believe that our conversion is genuine.

David saith, "the law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul;" and no other means ever will convert the soul. You may talk of being converted at the mourning-bench, or at such a meeting of excitement, at Sunday-school, or at a certain prayermeeting; and if your conversion is not effected by the means appointed by Jesus Christ and leads you to a strict adherence to his Gospel: it will prove abortive, and will rather tend to your condemnation at the awful day of accounts.

Here you may trifle with the word of God, but you cannot trifle there. Here it is optional, whether you obey the Son of God, but there you must obey him. Depend upon it my dear friends, the time is coming that every man's work shall be tried, of what sort it is. And other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid by Jesus Christ.

And now, my dear brethren and sisters, let us see how we build upon this foundation, that it is with such materials that will stand the fire, whenever other things will be dissolved. O! let

the trial of our faith be found much more precious than gold, though it be tried with fire, that it might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us not be at ease or rest contended with the empty hope of belonging to the church-militant here below.

We might also be deceived in that, and come too late with the foolish virgins. But let us in all things live up to the Gospel, setting our affections above by being weaned more and more from the world: doing good to the children of men, being watchful, prayerful, sober, sincere, of good behaviour, full of hospitality: adorning the doctrine of Christ in all things. In short, to let our light so shine, that others may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

And you, who stand aloof from the promises of God, seek an interest in Jesus. Enlist under his banner, before the door of mercy will be forever closed upon you. Finally, let us all examine ourselves closely, that we are not only hearers of the word, deceiving ourselves; but also be doers of the same, that we may be blessed in our deed. And above all, "Take heed that no man deceive you." "Be not deceived for God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." Every one must give an account of himself to God.

The converting means of grace are briefly, first the drawings of the Father, or the grace of God operating upon the heart of the sinner, reproving, convicting, and convincing him of the error of his ways, which brings uneasiness on his mind with remorse of conscience. He becomes sensible of his sins and folly, forms a resolution to forsake sin and reform his life. The next step is a true and genuine repentance towards God and faith towards Jesus Christ. He now changes his mind, which will manifest itself by a thorough reformation of life. He then receives Jesus Christ in baptism according to the mode laid down in the Gospel. His faith then becomes active and saving, and by willingly complying with all the requirements of God's word, as plainly revealed in the Gospel, in simplicity and sincerity of heart. He then can say with a David, The law of the Lord is perfect; it converted my soul.

And nothing short of that law will ever convert a soul to God. You may plume yourself up with your conversion, boast of your good works, make long and excited prayers; and if your conversion is not from heaven, wrought by the Spirit of God, in conformity with his word; it is but delusion, and at the end your immortal soul must take its abode in everlasting misery and woe. Dreadful thought! O the soul, that immortal part is too valuable to be trifled with in such a manner!

Take warning! Take warning while you have time and opportunity! Remember the words of Jesus, "Take heed that no man deceive you." I want to be happy, and want you all to be happy. Think of the blessing in store in the happy regions of eternal glory, after landing on the sunny banks of everlasting deliverance. Where all the redeemed shall meet together, and enter into the joys of neverfading bliss, there to walk the golden streets of God's celestial city, with palms of victory in their hands, and with crowns of glory on their heads; singing the song of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever.

May God grant us a place in Paradise is the concluding prayer of your weak and unworthy servant in the Lord.

ARISTOBULUS.

For the Visiter.

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.

Oh sinner hast thou ever taken it into deep consideration what it is to fall into the hands of a just God? Knowest thou not that it is appointed unto all men once to die and after death the judgment? And dost thou not know the awful consequences which await thee, if thou forsakest not thy evil ways? O remember, that God is a God of justice and will not be mocked. He spares, but will not spare forever; no, before thou art aware, he will whet his glittering sword, and strike thee to the ground; for vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay.

Reflect one moment, if he should demand thy soul, what will be thy doom? —What, if it be, Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire; for I never knew you. Let me point you to the chamber of that dying sinner. Behold him, his body racked with pain, and his soul just ready to be launched into eternity; his eyes swimming in agony, he pleads for mercy; but alas it is too late, his spirit has gone, gone, did I say, where?—to the dark regions of despair. O awfully solemn thought!

Let me ask you, O unconverted man and woman, can you stand and gaze on such a sight, and not feel the deep yearnings after immortality?—No, you cannot; it is almost impossible; you will shudder at the very thoughts of falling a victim under such an unexpected stroke. Then let those solemn words sink deep into your heart, for you know not how soon the awful summons may be pronounced to you, "Man, return to dust; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return!

Then, O man, it behooves thee to live in such a manner, that when thy earthly career is run thou canst lie down and die in the blessed hope of meeting thy God in a prepared state. It is not so with the Christian as it is with the sinner. No, when the period has arrived for him to lay down this tabernacle in the dust, his mind is serene and calm; he knows no corroding, heart-consuming care. No, but he gives himself up into the hands of his Maker, and can say, O death, where is thy sting? and boasting grave, where is thy victory? His friends may stand and weep around his dying bed, but they rejoice in the blessed hope, that his spirit has fled to—

That dwelling of the eternal God,
A land of pure delight,
Where peace and love is spread abroad,
And faith is lost in sight.

L. D.

* * *

THE FASHIONS.

It is highly necessary for us, who have made an open confession of our Lord and Master before the world, to so conduct ourselves, that our light might so shine, that others may see it, and be constrained to give glory to God in the highest. Now how can we do it, if we follow all the frivolous and foolish fashions of the world? It is not for me to say, you must have your clothes made so and so, and after such and such a man's fashion; and the word of God does not tell us to have on such and such garments, further than to have our spirits clothed with pure and undefiled religion.

We have this admonition, "*that we are not to be conformed to this world.*" Hence whatsoever we wear for pride, or wear to gain the applause or good will of any person, we then are trying to please the eyes of fallible and perishable mortals, then we are seeking to please

man rather than God, and by so doing we are conforming to the world. Therefore we should never wear any thing, that will not tend to our comfort and health; for if we do, it comes from pride, and whatsoever comes from pride, is evil.

But says one, it requires a little pride to appear decent. But I think, that is a mistake; for pride is an evil, that sinks thousands into perdition, while it is a heaven-born principle in every person, to be decent. Hence they are different things; the one evil, and the other good. And there is another danger yet, that many, who profess to be Christians fall into, and they excuse themselves, that it is the custom of the world, that is, they style their ministers the most reverend so and so, applying titles to man, that belong only to a higher power, and often calling their brother, Mr. so and so, which is contrary to the word of God; for we nowhere find the apostles, who were divinely inspired, call their followers Mr., but always brethren, and from them we are to take our example, never to seek to please the sense of men but always try to please God, and to do so, we must obey his divine will that he has left on record for us.

CEPHAS.

ON FRIENDSHIP UNRETURNED.

By a widowed sister.

We can stem the rough tides of adversity and meet pale thread-bare poverty, as she approaches with tottering steps towards our dwelling. We may be placed upon the bed of sickness and suffering from excruciating pains, and still enjoy composure and even happiness. But when we meet with cold neglect from those we love, our happiness is gone, and nought but desolation is within. It is then that the keenest sensibilities of our nature are alive to the ungenerous return, which we have received from those to whom our tender sympathy and warmest affections were freely given. It is then that we feel the utter impossibility to arouse our drooping spirits and keep aloof from the melancholy impressions which throng us on every side.

We in vain look around for some object on which to build our hopes; pleasant gardens with their beautiful flowers, wide spreading fields clothed in garments of living green, we present to our view, but all this availeth nothing, so long as the conviction comes back to mind of friendship unreturned; cold cheerless sounds, colder even than atheism, which sends its chilling blasts to the hearts of those who come within its influence.

We have the firm assurance that there is a Deity, and He has impressed upon our hearts the feelings, which are produced by the soft and tender emotions of friendship.—"God is love," and are not we his children? Then why not partake of his nature? He extendeth his loving kindness to all and ought we not to imitate him?

Surely we can in a manner cultivate an attachment toward all mankind and especially towards those who cherish feelings of tenderness for us. Then why, oh why send the warm blood curdling back to the heart and freezing it to the very fount of life, with repulsive and disdainful indifference? Why wound the most refined feelings of our nature, and causing every thing around to wear the appearance of gloom and sadness??

Dark and dreary indeed would this world be, if we were not cheered and enlivened by the kindness of those who are bound to us by the warmest attachment of unbroken friendship. Who

when poverty, sickness, and distress approach with unsparing hand, will ever be near encouraging us onward in the path of duty and virtue and bidding us look to hope which stands pointing to brighter scenes and better days, whose voice is music to the soul, as it comes forth in the deepest tones of sympathy, banishing the clouds of sorrow which obscure our atmosphere and making us forget every thing else while enjoying the presence of those who are dear, far more dear to us than all the wealth and magnificence that mortals can possess.

Then let us search into the innermost recesses of the mind, and see if there is aught to blast the innocent affections which are bestowed upon us in their native purity and simplicity. Could we be so lost, so utterly destitute of feelings, as not to return the proffered embrace or the affectionate caress which is offered with so much frankness and sincerity? But to turn away with marked negligence is too much, even more than we can endure. The thought is too humiliating; we feel the unpleasantness of our situation, and no longer seek for the pleasures of friendship.

But for a moment turn your mind to the word of the Lord, John xiii. 34. 35. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Now dearly beloved in the Lord, how is it with us? Do we truly love one another? MARY C. N.

SECURITY OF THE CHURCH.

No man needs be afraid to let Jesus Christ be chief in the world: he envies nobody; he designs the hurt of none: his kingdom is not of this world, nor doth he covet temporal matters: let but his wife, his church, alone, to enjoy her purchased privileges, and all shall be well; which privileges of hers, since they are soul-concerns, make no infringement upon any man's liberties. Let but faith and holiness walk the streets without control, and you may be as happy as the world can make you. I speak now to them that contend with him.

But if seasonable counsel will not go down, if hardness of heart and blindness of mind and so perishing from the way shall overtake you, it is but what you of old have been cautioned of: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

POETRY.

"Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne;
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

Worthy the Lamb that died, they cry,
To be exalted thus;
Worthy the Lamb our souls reply,
For he was slain for us.

Jesus is worthy to receive
Honor and power divine;
And blessings, more than we can give
Be, Lord, forever thine.

The whole creation join in one,
To bless the sacred name
Of Him that sits upon the throne,
And to adore the Lamb."

QUESTIONS PUT TO AND ANSWERED BY OUR BRETHREN 140 YEARS AGO.

Continued from page 23.

Qu. 7. Whether in that case they would not have to acknowledge and confess, that in order to restore the same as well as to introduce it at first, an immediate divine call was necessary and requisite, such as had occurred according to the testimony of scripture and universal confession always in such great reformations of the church?

Ans. We believe this very willingly, that to the carrying out of the doctrine of Jesus an immediate call and assistance of the Spirit of God is required; but that this call should be established and revealed before men with signs and wonders, in this we would not undertake to prescribe any thing to the allwise God. It will be sufficient, if it is a call of God; men may believe it or not. Herein we should be resigned.

Qu. 8. Whether one of them could rise up, who would dare to say before God on his soul and responsibility in the hour of his death and in the day of judgment, that he had received such an immediate call from God, to re-establish that long-decayed order of baptism, and to re-organize therewith an entirely new church of Christ here on earth, (such as should not have been any more since the times of the apostles and primitive Christians)?

Ans. When the Pharisees sent from Jerusalem, to inquire of John, Whether he was Christ or that prophet, because he baptized?—he answered, I baptize with water unto repentance, but there standeth one among you, whom you know not; the same shall baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost. So say we likewise in simplicity, We baptize indeed only in water upon the faith in Christ, who even in these days makes his voice heard in the hearts of men. Oh, if they only would obey him, and know him right, then he should be it alone, and would remain it alone, who would establish for himself a church in these days, and sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word! Eph. v. 26. This no man should apply to himself, or say before men, that he was sent from God to establish a church, but much rather should he leave the glory to God, and if even God uses some as particular instruments, yet we must prove them, whether they are sent of God, as John says, Ch. iii. 34. "For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God."

Qu. 9. Wherein such his immediate call consists, and how he could or would justify and prove the same towards the hearts and consciences as well of those, who are yet among the sects, as those who are already come out of them to their outward and inward conviction?

Ans. The immediate call consists in this, that the person is inwardly and powerfully assured by the Spirit of God of it, and does not trouble himself, whether men will believe it or not; as our Saviour himself says, John vi. 43. 44. "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Just so it is still. No man can come to the doctrine of Christ, except the Father draw him, and he that will obey the drawing of the Father, will well know, where the called and chosen believers are.

Qu. 10. Whether we should not properly and according to truth conclude, that, if this work is of God, and that they had received such an immediate and divine call for it, there should be willing souls who by thousands would have appeared in obedience to it,

as at the first Pentecost of the New Testament happened upon the demonstration of the Spirit and power of Jesus Christ in and by the apostles of the Lord?

Ans. Christ says, Matt. xxiv. to his own, especially in these times, "Take heed that no man deceive you." He says by no means, that in such troublesome times, (in which, alas! we are now, where love in many hearts has waxed cold,) men will run by thousands to his Gospel. Nay, even well-disposed souls do not enter so willingly upon following Christ, whereby we must deny ourselves in all things, if we indeed will follow Christ truly. Christ speaks rather of this time, when the abomination of desolation will be revealed, and we are only told to flee into the mountains, that is, the doctrine of the crucified Jesus is exalted by all believers, and is the city of God and mount Zion, of which we read, Heb xii. 22. 23. whither at all times all true believers have fled, and many a one is not able to bring his wife and children along, as was the case with LOT, though he was called by a divine call, and led out by an angel, to flee from destruction; yet he seemed to his friends, (in Sodom) as one that mocked, and even his own wife he had to leave standing behind him, wherefore Christ very briefly says to his own for their most serious consideration, Luke xvii. 32. *"Remember Lot's wife."*

Qu. 11. Whether water-baptism was thus absolutely necessary, that it was altogether impossible for any one to be saved without it, however otherwise holy and irreproachable he would believe and live?

Ans. We believe and profess, that in the Old and New Testament there are blessings and happiness promised only to the believers, and how believers have been minded and disposed at all times, we see in faithful ABRAHAM, the father of all the faithful, how he was obedient to God in all things, and obtained the promise on account of his faith, which was a living one, and brought forth works of obedience. Thus we believe, when a man lives holy and irreproachable, and this life proceeds from a true faith in Christ, then to this faith the obedience unto water-baptism will be certainly easier, than when ABRAHAM was to offer up his son. But when man yet disputes with his God, saying, *What can water help me?* then such a holy life is nothing but self-righteousness, which man tries to establish, just as the Jews did, of whom Paul makes mention. Rom. x. 2. 10. And to such a self-holiness no salvation is promised, but Christ is the end of the law; he who believes in him is justified, and faith in Christ produces obedience and subjection under all his words and commandments.

Qu. 12. Whether that chief passage, Mark xvi. 16. did not rather prove the contrary, where Christ speaks so considerately: "He that believeth not, (and not, he that is not baptized,) shall be damned?"

Ans. We truly believe and confess this, that not for the sake of baptism, but only to faith in Christ eternal life is promised, John iii. 15–18. But why should a believer not be willing to that, what He wills, in whom he believes:—now because Christ wills that the believer should be baptized, the believer will it too, and if he is thus willing, and believes as Christ wills, he will be saved, and even if he could not of necessity obtain baptism:—even as ABRAHAM, who was willing to offer up his son ISAAC; yet it was not done, the son was not sacrificed, but the obedience was fulfilled, and obtained the blessing. Thus also a believer, who is willing to

be baptized, but cannot obtain it from not being possible, as the case was with the malefactor on the cross, is saved. But if a man *will not* be baptized, then he will be justly condemned as an unbeliever and disobedient, not because of baptism, but because of his unbelief and disobedience. Therefore Christ says truly, *He that believeth*. Otherwise if Christ had bound salvation to the water, men would probably prefer to be baptized, and then follow their own will in other things, even as Antichrist doeth, and ascribes salvation to the water, man may live otherwise as he listeth.

Qu. 13. If water-baptism be absolutely necessary, why did Christ make no mention at all of it in his sermon on the mount, speaking of blessing, Matth. v. neither in his description of judgment, Matt. xxv. where he treats specially of those who shall be saved or damned?

Ans. It is to be wondered at, that the pure sense of God's word is not noticed. Christ truly speaks Matt. v. of many blessings, but we might ask, where can these blessings be obtained? Christ says, Blessed are the meek. Now take notice how Christ calls, Matth. xi. 28. 29. Come unto me all and learn of me! Thus we confess, that Christ alone is our Saviour, and he that is willing to be so saved as He preaches, Matth. v. must necessarily receive him in true faith, and must submit himself to Him in obedience, as clay to the potter, and it is He, who must make all things new and blessed, to whom all the prophets have pointed. And God himself points to the Son. Now since Christ the Saviour, yea the good physician, deems also baptism to be necessary for the believer; therefore obedience toward this command of baptism is necessary unto salvation, though Christ Matt. xxv. calls them blessed, who have given him meat, and clothed him, and makes no mention at all of the new creature or new birth, of which he had spoken, John iii. that no man without being born again could enter into the kingdom of God, and said nothing there of visiting in prison or feeding his members: who would or could now think, that those Matt. xxv. were unregenerate or unbelieving men, whom he calls blessed for the sake of outward works? Oh no, who should think, that they should have been despisers of his baptism?—I believe, that not one single despiser of water-baptism will be found among them, though there may be unbaptized ones, who were not baptized from necessity and not from contempt.

Qu. 14. Whence they will take proof, that JOHN THE BAPTIST was baptized himself, after he had said to Christ of himself, Matt. iii. 14. "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Or whether he by a special exception was saved without water-baptism?

Ans. Just so many other things might be asked, Where Peter and John were baptized, or where this or that saint of the Old Testament was circumcised, and thus more questions might be ministered rather than godly edifying which is in faith, as Paul mentions 1 Tim. i. that there were men giving heed to endless genealogies. Yet we will also herein answer in patience. JOHN was truly willing to be baptized of Christ, and asked for it, to which faith we ascribe salvation according to scripture, and not to outward baptism. Now though it is not expressly said in scripture, that he was baptized; yet we find in the scriptures, that he was no despiser of baptism. & JOHN will not at alike found among those who say. Ah! what can water help me? But he has proved

his obedience towards Christ, as ABRAHAM proved his obedience towards God in offering up his son; the son was not sacrificed, and yet obedience was fulfilled.

Qu. 15. Whether all those, who after the times of the primitive Christians had lived and died without the primitive order of baptism, though they had followed otherwise all the fundamental rules of Christ and of true Christianity, also had given their blood and life for it, were absolutely lost and damned, merely because they, either from want of knowledge, or from want of a higher aspiration, had remained satisfied with their baptism, received in infancy?

Ans. If it happened with them, as with ABRAHAM in offering up his son, namely that they had true faith in Christ, which is the foundation of all the rules of true Christianity, then they are certainly saved, though they have not obtained outward baptism, perhaps in times of persecution, or on account of other circumstances. But if they thought, their infant-baptism was right, then they were of course yet ignorant in the first principles of the christian religion, and will therefore have lived but little or not at all according to the fundamental rules of true Christianity, and have scarcely obtained the new creation, which only is acceptable to God. However we will not judge those, who have lived many years ago, but let them stand to their God; and their ignorance can help nothing at all in the day of retribution to those men now-a-days, who also from ignorance are opposed to baptism.

Qu. 16. Whether the law of baptism not also, as the law of circumcision in the old covenant, is going to children; and such therefore, as long as they are unbaptized, are in danger of salvation: also, whether they are damned, if they die without baptism?

Ans. As little as circumcision before the eighth day concerned the children any thing, but would rather have been a transgression of (the law of) circumcision, so little does that baptism, which is commanded unto believers, concern children, before they can confess their faith, whereto even the eighth day of circumcision is pointing as a type.

Qu. 17. Whether the children, who died in the old covenant without circumcision, and before obtaining it, are damned? And how are we to consider then the confident words of DAVID 2 Sam. xii. 23. with regard to his child, that was born of Bathsheba, and died on the seventh day?

Ans. The male children, who died before the eighth day, have transgressed the law of circumcision as little as the females, who were not circumcised at all, and this was no hinderance to their salvation. ENOCH walked with God, lived to the age of several hundred years, and was not circumcised; yet he was obedient to God, and this was not commanded him. Thus it is with the law of God; where there is no law, there is no transgression; where no transgression is, there is no penalty.

Qu. 18. When children are properly to be baptized? And whether we should not use all diligence, to bring them to baptism as soon as possible, and even if it would be done in their infancy?

Ans. Children we should offer up to the Lord Jesus by prayer, but wait with baptizing, until they can show and confess faith, which is the true eighth day or the first day of the new creation in man. But if we baptize them before in their ignorance, then it is just as if the Jews had circumcised before the eighth day, which would rather have been a transgression of circumcision, than an obedience.

Qu. 19. Whether children are not also capable of baptism, as of faith, according to Luke i. 41—44. Matt. xviii. 3. 6. Luke xviii. 16. 17. 1 Cor. vii. 14. &c.—though they cannot like the adult confess the same with many words; inasmuch according to Mark xvi. 16. it does not depend so much upon the—so easily deceiving — confession of the words, as upon the truth of the faith itself?

Ans. This one single example we have in holy writ, that JOHN in his mother's womb was moved by the holy Ghost, because he was a child of promise, and should be the forerunner of the Lord. Yet we perceive that they could not circumcise him in his mother's womb, but after he was born into the world, still they waited with circumcision until the eighth day, consequently the motion of holy John could not make void God's law of circumcision, but he had to be circumcised, even as the other children, on the EIGHTH day. Just so it is with baptism, that if the children of believing parents should be moved even in their mothers' wombs, we would have to wait with baptism, until they were born into the world, and after they were born, we would have again to wait, until they were moved by the holy Ghost to ask for baptism with express words; and then we would be allowed to baptize them,—because outward water-baptism requires an outward demand, as we see of Christ himself, Matt. iii. 13. and such demand must be wrought by true faith in the Lord Jesus. Otherwise it is not allowed to baptize a child, ☞ because salvation is not bound to the water, but only to faith, which must be proved by love and obedience.

Qu. 20. Whether it does not run against the evangelical manner of the new Covenant, to make an outward ceremony absolutely necessary unto salvation, and whether it would not correspond with the doctrine of those old zealots for the law, against whom Paul in his letters to the Galatians and Colossians has written so severely?

Ans. We make of outward baptism nothing else, but as it is commanded in the scriptures. Now since there it is said, that believers shall be baptized, we deem it a disobedience, if we oppose ourselves to what God has commanded. And he that opposes God even in one thing only, and if it were but such a small matter as outward baptism, yet it would be rightfully punished for the sake of disobedience. Neither would I know, whether we might consider a single command of the Lord Jesus as a small matter, if we look without aversion upon the power and might of the Lawgiver. What Paul however has written to the Galatians and Colossians, refers only to the laws of the servant Moses, because they were too weak, and the Galatians wanted to keep them in order to free themselves from the cross of Christ, and to neglect the doctrine of Jesus. But Paul rather reminded them of baptism, when he writes, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;" Gal. iii. 27. and consequently is the mind of Paul not at all against, but rather for baptism.

Qu. 21. Whether by making baptism as a command absolutely necessary unto salvation there is not introduced a new popery, teaching salvation by works?

Ans. We have testified above sufficiently, that we do not seek to merit salvation by such simple works, but alone by faith in Jesus, which must produce works of obedience, if it is to be a saving faith. And where such a faith

doth not exist, which produces obedience (not according to the Pope's doctrine and command, but according to the command of our crucified Jesus,) there is no promise of salvation upon not one single work which is performed without faith.

Qu. 22. Whether the outward ban (excommunication) be an essential part belonging to the church of Christ, since Christ did not practize and execute it for once even on the very wicked Judas?

Ans. The BAN is an essential and necessary ordinance in the church of Christ, as long as here in this wicked world she is at war with wolves and evil spirits. There can be no church of Christ without the BAN. The devil would soon destroy all that is good by his leaven of wickedness, and true believers, if they were steadfast in the faith, could never do without it, but have looked upon it as a provision of divine grace and the great love of God, and used it as a firm wall round about the church of the Lord. But as to the inquiry about Judas we say, that Christ has exercised the BAN upon him sufficiently, having given him over to Satan, so that he strangled himself. That he was not put in the BAN by Christ before the outward deed was done, such is not against it, but rather for it. This was always the mind of God, as we can notice in Adam, who, though he may have had intercourse with the tempter before, yet was not driven out of Paradise, until he had eaten outwardly of the forbidden fruit. Just so Judas had for a long time contemplated to betray his Lord, but the long-suffering of Jesus bore with him, had patience with him and called him to repentance, until at last the evil obtained the upper hand, and broke out into the deed. Then he came truly into the ban of Christ, and certainly the ban was duly practized on Judas.

Qu. 23. Whether the binding and loosening on earth of the apostles was not a prerogative specially entrusted to them, which no man now-a-days could assume in the same manner?

Ans. That the loosening and binding granted to the apostles, was a peculiar prerogative, we admit as true, but in this manner, that as it was a peculiar prerogative in Moses, that by him the law was revealed unto the house of Israel, but yet no such prerogative, that at the death of Moses the law should have been dead too; for those that came after him and were faithful unto God, submitted in obedience to that, what had been revealed by Moses in the house of God. Just so Christ as the true householder has established for himself a church and household, and has given to his apostles as to witnesses chosen before, this prerogative, that they should establish all the ordinances in the house of God, and confirm them with signs and miracles, in order that all those who should come after them, should not be presumptuous either through forwardness or through pride, to introduce other ordinances, but should willingly submit to those ordinances, which have been ordained by the apostles as stewards of the mysteries of God in the house of the Lord. Now since the BAN has been commanded by Christ and his apostles, this prerogative is properly left to them; but believers must submit to it in faith, and use it without respect of persons.

Qu. 24. Whether Christ gave in the words, Matt. xviii. 17. a general law for the church of the New-Testament; or not rather spake after the manner of the Jewish of it, and gave to his own besides in the following 21st & 22d verses quite another lesson?

Ans. That Christ in the words Matt. xviii. 17. hath given a general law for his church, was proved above; and that it was by no means abolished by the following verses 21 & 22, but rather confirmed, appears from the expression Luke xvii. 4. where Christ says, "If thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." For without acknowledging our sin there is no forgiveness, even with God. Just so believers must be like-minded; if the sinner acknowledges, his sin, we must forgive him. But if he doth not acknowledge it, the ban must duly be observed, because Christ says, Matth. xxviii. "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

(Concluded in our next.)

LETTERS FROM LYDIA S.

(We have already published two letters, one in german, some time ago, and the other in english in last No. (page 13) from this same person. We deemed them interesting to our readers, as coming from JERUSALEM; from that land, where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob sojourned as strangers;—where the children of Israel dwelt, as in their own land, given them of God conditionally; —and where the Saviour was born; where he went about, doing good, where he suffered and died, and where he rose again from the dead, and ascended to heaven. Surely that land cannot be uninteresting to the lovers of the Lord, especially as there are many prophecies, which seem to indicate, that this same land shall become again the theatre of some of the greatest events yet future, and in a manner the land, to which the worshipers of God will gather together from all parts of the world as of old, and still more so.

Besides this, there has been an interest excited about the writer of these letters. Who is she? What are her religious sentiments? What was the moving cause of her leaving this country, her parents and friends, and of going so far away among strangers! &c. &c. In answer to these questions we will state, that we became lately acquainted with a brother of LYDIA SHULER, and though we had no time for an extended conversation, we learned the following particulars. She is the daughter of parents, residing in Lehigh co. Pa. who, if we mistake not, are members of our fraternity, (at any rate the son, with whom we conversed, is a brother,) but, living at a distance from a regular church, did enjoy but seldom the public means of grace. Hence the children were perhaps more exposed to the influence of other religious societies, and so this LYDIA happened to come in connection with the Millerites or Second-Advent's-people, as our informant expressed it, and with some of these, it seems, she went to Palestine about 3 years ago. What her object was, may perhaps best be ascertained from the following letters, which were kindly communicated to us in the original by her parents and brother.

We have stated these things, and given the former letters, which had been published before in other papers, as we have said above, on account of the interest we all take in the so-called Holy Land, and to satisfy the curiosity of those, who wished to know more of the writer of these letters. But we should be very sorry, if some of our readers would look upon this LYDIA as some extraordinary person, and be induced to overwhelm her with letters, as she makes mention in her last letter published, (see last No. page 13.) "that she had a letter from an old man in Missouri who gave a letter &c." It is evident, that she was led astray by a sectarian excitement, though she may be as pious and as benevolent, as we may imagine her to be from her letters. By a careful letting her alone to God, and the word of his grace, she may yet see, where she missed the way. But by unwisely making SOMETHING of her, we may feed her vanity, and help to destroy a soul, for which Christ has also shed his precious blood.)

The following letter was written on sea, and dated

December 1, 1851.

Lieber Bruder und Freund.

Heute iſt der erſte Tag, daß ich vermögend bin zu ſchreiben. Ich hatte die See-

krankheit drei Wochen, und heute erst fühle ich kräftig genug zum Schreiben. Heute ist es 28 Tage, daß wir auf dem tiefen Meer sind, wo wir nichts sehen als den blauen Himmel und das blaue Wasser. Die See-Krankheit ist keine schmerzliche Krankheit, es ist nur Brechen und Schwindel im Kopf. Das Schiff schockelt immer wie eine Wiege, und wenn der Wind stark ist, schwingt es so, daß wir gezwungen sind auf Händen und Füßen zu laufen (kriechen.) Ich unternahm einmal zu laufen, und fiel auf einen Stuhl, daß ich blaue Måler davon trug.

Dec. 9. Es ist ein lieblicher warmer Tag, und wenig Wind. Heute sahen wir einen Wallfisch; er war ungefähr 35 Fuß lang. Der Capitain sagte, es wäre einer von der mittleren Länge. Wie ich das große Meerthier anschaute, dachte ich an Jonas, wie er drei Tage in des Fisches Bauch wohnte. Es hat Fische mit Flügel, die gut sind zu essen, und wann sie verfolgt werden von andern Fischen, so fliegen sie aus dem Meer. Einer flog auf das Schiff; er war ein Fuß lang, und schmeckte ziemlich viel wie unsere Forellen.—I will write the rest in english.

Dec. 21. We are still on the deep blue ocean; the weather is warm and pleasant, and I am quite well now, and so are all the rest.

Dec. 25. Christmas-day. Yesterday we went through the straits of GIBRALTAR, which divides Europe and Africa, and now we are on the MEDITERRANEAN. I have often heard of it, and now I am here myself. Oh what a change has taken place in a few weeks! —We had a good Christmas-dinner; that was all we could see about Christmas.

January 1, 1852. Newyear. The weather is warm, so that I can write on deck; as I am writing, my thoughts fly back to you, and pray that you may begin anew with me to serve the Lord. Now, farewell; wishing you all a happy New-year. We have every morning and evening family-prayer.

January 9. After 63 days journey we arrived here at MARSEILLES, where we shall take a french vessel to-morrow for JAFFA, and we have to pay $ 93 for us eight persons, and find ourselves in provisions and beds. The vessel is small, we are going in. This is the only vessel that is going to Jaffa. The Lord is very good to us. He has brought us safe here to this port, whilst others have lost their lives. We had only one storm, and that was in the Gulf of LYONS, where there it is alway stormy. We have the privilege to stay on this vessel, till we go on the other.

How different it is here in this city, to what it is in America! Their dress and customs strange; we cannot understand their language, for they all talk French. But the Lord has raised up a young man, who can talk english, and he is very kind, and is trying to do all he can for us. He is indeed a friend in need. He got the vessel for us. We expected to take the steamer to BEYROOT and from there to JAFFA; but they asked $80 in the steamer for one person.

We received a letter from brother JAMES last night. He wrote that LEAH was in Philadelphia. Leah told James to tell me, that mother grieved much after me. I expected she would, and I prayed much for her. I wanted to come home before I started; but the time was so short. Mother! I do not go for honor or wealth; it is for God's sake, and he will not let me perish. He has brought me thus far, and I trust He will bring me to the land, where Jesus shed his blood for us.

I have many, many things to tell you; but the time is so short for me to write. We have to move to another vessel to-day or to-morrow. One thing I would wish of BEATA, that she would send me her history of Lehigh county.—I meet with persons that want to know about my country, and I could give them to read that. If you have any thing to send to me, give it to brother James' sister Anna, to bring with them, when they come in the spring.

I am very well, and can eat like a wood-cutter; the sea-voyage has done me much good. I feel entirely changed in my body. I am always hungry, and can eat what comes before me. All the rest improve much in health. Oh how good the Lord is! I have not been home-sick yet; I have good friends with me. I will write, when I get to JERUSALEM. I can truly say I am a pilgrim and I am a stranger.

Last night we walked about in the city, and not a word I could understand; all french. We went into a store, and they looked at us, and we at them; that was all we could do. The FRENCH are very polite; they bow to us, and the men take their hats off when they talk to us. We have good wine and grapes here.

I will in haste close my letter, for the time is very short. My love to you all, and to all the dear friends. Pray for me. May the God of peace be with you forever. Amen. So much from your sister

LYDIA SHULER.

To Moses Shuler.

* * *

Communicated for the Visiter.

"*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*" Rev. iii. 20.

The above text has been bearing upon my mind for some time past; and now the question may arise, Who was (or is) this address made unto? Is it to the young, the middle aged, the old aged, the rich, the poor, the proud, the humble, the black or the white? In answer to the above queries I would say: Sinner, it is made to you: it matters not what may be your station or situation in this life; if you are living in your sins, you are a stranger to God. God is not well pleased with you, and therefore he is day by day entreating you, to turn from your wicked ways & receive with meekness the divine word, which is able to save your soul and give you an inheritance among all the sanctified.

Is there an individual, who has crossed the line of accountability, who dare to rise and say, that God has never been knocking at his heart, (which represents the door in the text,)? No, I dare to say that there is not a rational being, but will be ready to acknowledge, that time and again they have felt the operations of the Spirit of God upon their hearts. If you would feel disposed to doubt this assertion, we likely can appeal to your own conscience by giving a few examples from self-experience: have you not in your youthful days felt as if all was not right, and you could not assign any cause? If so, it was the Spirit of the Most High, operating upon your tender heart in order to draw you unto him while in your youth.

At other times, you have been tempted to do something that you thought would be no harm, and when going to join in the undertaking you would feel an inward check, which seemed to say, forsake Satan and all his evil ways, and turn in with offered mercy and serve the

Lord thy God while it is called to-day; for soon it may be too late.

At another time you have been called upon, to visit some dear relation or intimate acquaintance that is expected every minute to breathe his or her last, and finally you have seen them at the moment that their spirit took its flight into a world unknown. Pause and reflect a moment on the feelings you had at that time! Your heart throbbed within your breast; you asked yourself the question, Is the spirit of my departed friend gone into heaven, there to enjoy the sweet presence of its God forever? Or, has it sunk into everlasting ruin beneath the frowns of an offended God?—

You have then turned to yourself and said, My God! how long? O how long will it be until my spirit must take its flight, and am I prepared to meet my God in peace? Then you have made vows unto the Lord; you have promised to become one of his followers by submitting yourself unto his holy will, as it is left upon record in that well-known book, called the *New Testament.*

You have at other times been seated under the sound of God's voice, when his ambassadors have been engaged in proclaiming unto a dying world, *their* wickedness and also the goodness and glory of Almighty God: I say you have thus been seated and heard God's word declared unto you, and you have felt condemned in consequence of your transgressions and disobedience; you have then vowed and declared within yourself, that you would repent and be baptized and become obedient unto God.

Dear friendly soul: this has been my case, and I make no doubt but it has been yours; and rest assured, that it has been God's knocking at your heart: the Spirit of God has been striving with you. I might produce many more instances of God's knocking at the door of our hearts, but I deem it unnecessary at this time; for, alas! how soon are they all forgotten? I say, how soon does the enemy of souls sow tares among the good seed, and, sorrowful to say, the tares are apt to grow and choke the good seed!

Remember, man, whoever you be, if you have not made your peace with God, you are in a dangerous situation; you stand on slippery ground. For remember, the Lord has said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." O turn in with offered mercy; open the door and admit your Saviour to come in and sup with you. Who would not desire to sup with their Saviour? What a happy time would it be? The meek & lowly Lamb of God; He who spake as never man spake; supping with the children of men, those, who are despised by the great and noble of the land. Who would not be willing to take upon himself the cross of Christ and be despised of men, for the sake of having communion with the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth?

Be it remembered, that heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God shall not pass away. This being the fact, you must be assured that if you die in your sins, you must be banished from God and all his holy angels. Can you bear the idea of taking your portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, where the smoke of your torment will ascend up for ever and ever? I think I hear you say, No, no; my God! grant that I may participate with thee and all the blood-bought souls in heaven. If you desire to participate with the blest of God's house, you must suffer with his children while probationers of this un-

friendly world; so now I entreat you by the mercies of God, to open your heart and become one of his followers and I offer up prayers unto the most high God, in the behalf of your unworthy brother

E. W. M.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

FAITH. (Continued.*)

What was then the cause that Lot's wife looked back, from behind him? For it was not said to Lot, I suppose, in what way or manner the city should be destroyed, but it was told them to escape for their life. I believe, that she looked back in the first place to see what would become of Sodom and Gomorrah, or else to see whether the Lord is going to destroy the city according to his saying. And in the second place she thought, that the Lord would not hold her accountable for looking back to her house, where she left.

In the next place let us see how strong Lot was in faith, when he was told to go, and not to stay in all the plains and on the way. His wife became a pillar of salt, yet he trusted in the Lord's command. While his companion turned from behind him, he did not look back to see what had occurred with his wife; neither did he look back to see what would become of Sodom and Gomorrah. When it was told to Lot or the command was given, then he took the Lord by his word, in true faith and then put it to practice, for Lot might have made the excuse to look back where his companion stayed, or what became of her; but he did not look back.

Oh then let us all, brethren and sisters and fellow-travelers to the bar of God, take warning, that we do not look back in our pilgrimage here below. All those that have enlisted under the blood-stained banner of king Jesus; let us press forward to the mark of our high calling, that we may not look back in our faith as Lot's wife and become obnoxious in the sight of God. We see, how just God is, that he wants us to go according to his word, and not according to our opinion or notion.

Let us hear, what Moses said to Israel. "Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him." Num. xv. 31. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them, that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue; and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them. 37—39. verses.

What? to put fringes on their garments? This was too simple a command. When Korah heard this saying, he thought this cannot be essential to them, and neither was it. But it was to their destruction, and they gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them. And the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? xvi. 3. Now Korah thought, that the Lord was with them, and that Moses and Aaron make it too much; they thought that they were all holy every one of them. And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face, and spake unto Korah, and unto all his company, saying, Even to-mor-

*)See last vol. page 232.

row the Lord will shew, who are his, and who is holy.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

And Moses said, hereby ye shall know, that the Lord hath sent me, to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder, that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up and their houses and all the men that appertained unto Korah and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed up on them, and they perished from the congregation; and there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. v. 35. Now we can easily see, that God is a righteous being, that he wants us to obey, what he has commanded, and not speak against any of his precepts, and if we do he will hold us accountable for it.

Let us hear the apostle again, Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith. Prove your ownselves, for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith; 1 John v. 3. 4. Oh then let us not make ourselves liable in the sight of God like Korah, Dathan and Abiram, to say within ourselves, the Lord is not so strict, that he will hold us accountable for such small command. Oh God, how ought we to be ashamed before thee and before ourselves, that we are not wiser and better, that we are so slowly towards the perfection of ourselves! How often do we look back upon the lust of this world, like Lot's wife upon Sodom and Gomorrah, after we have come out from the world, and have renounced the devil and all the lust of the world! Yet how often do we take share in its pleasure, that is, we go too much after the fashion of this world. Why should we not? Because we find in the word of God, that we shall not be conformed to this world; but be ye transformed. Now this is a command as well as it was to Lot, not to look back and how often do we go after the fashion of this world?

J. B.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ERRATUM. In last No. page 7, col. 1, line 12 & 13 from below read RELIGIONS" instead of *regions*.

☞Our agents are respectfully requested to state expressly on their subscription-lists, which of the subscribers are entitled to a minute of the Y. M. by putting after the name of such (M.) We would like to supply all who have a right to them, and yet avoid giving offence to those brethren, who are opposed to a free publication and distribution of the same.

☞Those of our dear readers, who have received the first No. and do not wish to continue it, will please to send us this No. back immediately; otherwise we will consider them as subscribers for the present volume. Of cases of death or removal of subscribers we should also like to be informed soon.

OBITUARY.

DIED at his residence in SNAKESPRINGVALLEY, BEDFORD Co. PA. June 10, 1854. GEORGE HARSHBERGER aged 69 years 7 months and 21 days. He always bore the character of a good & peaceable citizen, about 20 years ago he joined the church of the Brethren, and since he was considered to be a faithful member of the Brotherhood. He left an aged widow, a sister also, and five children to mourn their loss, but being well assured, that their loss is his great gain. He charged his children to serve the Lord, keep down pride, and to be kind to the poor. He now lays in a grave-yard in sight of his house, that he died in; nine of his children lie in the same grave-yard, all in a row, and as he was well reconciled to his death, the brethren that attended his funeral, made choice of John xiv. 1-4. "Let not your heart be troubled, &c.—"

It is the request that this notice may be inserted in the Visiter.——

JAMES K

THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER.

VOL. IV. August 1854. NO. 3.

ON THE ORDER OF THE PROPHECIES.

We have said in last No. in answer to the query, How shall the prophecies be fulfilled? that, according to our faith, they shall be fulfilled not only completely— each and all—in like manner as foretold—and in their appointed time & season,— *but also in their due order.* But now the question may be raised, What is that order?—and a superficial reader of the word of God might answer, I can perceive no order in the prophecies; they are mixed up and interspersed with other matter; they are scattered all through the Bible, here a little and there a little;— prophecies, who were soon after fulfilled, are thrown together with prophecies, whose fulfilment seems to require hundreds and thousands of years, and thus we are bewildered and perplexed, and all seems to be disorder and confusion.

Yes, dear friends, so it seems—to the superficial, hasty reader; this we grant, and say, so it should be. For remember, the holy oracles of God were not given to man merely to gratify his curiosity; they were not given for hasty, careless readers, who would like to be only "wise as gods," not caring whether they become "holy, as the Lord is holy." No, no; the word of God is given to his children, to God-fearing men and women, who will seriously and prayerfully read and contemplate, and like MARY keep all these things, which God has said and revealed. and ponder them in their heart. And, permit me to tell you, the more these simple children, these pious men and women read and contemplate, keep and observe the word of God, the more they discover the beautiful order and harmony of its contents, where others see nothing but disorder and confusion.

A certain preacher said not long ago, "There are just five classes of reading in the Bible, viz. History, Command, Promise, Threat, and Prophecy. And each of these is for a purpose, and for one purpose only, and neither one will answer the purpose of another." But, methinks, if he had understood and defined *prophecy* properly, as foretelling future events, he might just as well have said, There are only *three* classes of contents in the Bible, viz. *History*, or a testimony of things past;—*Command* of what is our present duty to do;—and *Prophecy*, or a declaration of things future. For what is *Promise*, but a foretelling of future rewards; or what is *Threat*, but a foretelling of future punishment and consequently prophecy?

The contents of the Bible thus simply classified, we see

1. that *history* was given us for the purpose of *exercising our faith*;

2. that *command* was given us for the purpose of *obeying it in love*; and

3. that *prophecy* was given us as a motive for our obedience, for the purpose of awakening and keeping alive our *hope*. And hence we see also, that these three are so closely connected, that each supports the other, and all three are absolutely necessary for every man or wo-

man, that wish to serve God, and enjoy a godly life.

Had God given the whole Bible to our first parents, as we have it now, ALL would have been prophecy to them, except what little of actual events is contained in the first 3 or 4 chapters of Genesis. And if the present amount of prophecy is confusing and bewildering to some readers, how much more would it have been then? But God in his wisdom saw fit, to give to each age of the world just so much history, command and prophecy, as was necessary and sufficient for them. Thus we find that what is contained in Gen. 1—4. was enough for that primitive age to exercise faith, love and hope;—enough for ENOCH *to walk with God*, Gen. v. 22—24. *to prophesy of a future judgment*, Jude 14. 15. *and to be translated, that he should not see death.* Heb. xi. 5.

And it is highly worthy of note, that the substance of all prophecy from Genesis to Revelation was given already to our first parents, in a few brief sentences. The first we find Gen. i. 26. where the original, and, as we believe, ultimate destiny of man was foretold. The second we find Gen. ii. 17. where Adam was foretold, what would be the consequence of disobedience. And the third is recorded Gen. iii. 15. where fallen man was foretold, in what way & by what means he might hope for *redemption*. And while we must admit, that these prophecies have been fulfilled in part, and are still in the course of fulfilment, yet we cannot help seeing that their *complete* fulfilment is yet future.

Now if we pursue our investigations of the succeeding prophecies, the result will be to see, that they all were based upon one or the other of these first prophecies, either repeating, explaining or applying them to particular cases, persons and circumstances, so as to enable those in after-ages, who feared God, who saw and felt the evil of sin, and groaned after redemption and delivery, to avoid mistakes, and look for redemption in the right direction;—to escape from impending calamities by using the means pointed out for present salvation, and the farther we read, the stronger we will be convinced, that the order in which God was pleased to give the prophecies was the most wise, the most appropriate, and the most necessary, namely to give to each age only so much, as was enough and sufficient for believers to warn them of dangers, and to enliven their hopes.

Again, if, enlightened by the light of the Gospel, we rightly distinguish in the reading of the prophets of old, between those prophecies concerning particular nations, which have been fulfilled even before Christ's first advent, and thus became matters of history; between those prophecies concerning this first coming of the Messiah, which were fulfilled in Christ; and those concerning the things yet future, in relation to Christ's kingdom, and in relation to the ancient people of Israel, and to its restoration;—we will perceive more and more of a divine order in them.

But the most obvious order we find in the prophecies of the New-Testament.—Let the reader contemplate the prophecies of our Saviour concerning the destruction of the temple, the sign of his coming, and the end of the world, see Matth. xxiv. and xxv. &c. the prophecies of the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 2 Thess. ii. &c. and particularly the prophecies contained in the Revelation of John;—let him read of the mystery of the seven stars, and the seven candlesticks, as explained Rev. i. 20.—let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the

churches, to the *seven* churches, which were representing *all* the true churches from the beginning of the Gospel even unto the end; Rev. ii. & iii.—let him see the book sealed with seven seals, one being opened after the other, and each revealing something different from the other; Rev. vi. vii,—let him again take notice of the seven angels with the seven trumpets, each one sounding after the other,each with a different effect; Rev. viii. ix. and lastly of the seven angels having the seven last plagues, one poured out after the other, Rev. xv. xvi.—we repeat, let the reader read and contemplate all this, and then say, whether there is not the most beautiful regularity, system and order in it?

And again, if this divine regularity and order is perceptible already outside, how much more would it appear, if we were permitted to take a view of the inside?—And if we are not only permitted, but even invited, and those called blessed, who read, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, should we not feel encouraged, each one for himself, to enter, to search, and to keep those things, which are written therein? And this to do the more earnestly since we are expressly told, that the time is at hand?—

But, there seems a caution to be necessary. Let us, dear brethren, enter by the door, and not like thieves & robbers. Let us remember, that God from the beginning never revealed to man more of His plans, than was necessary for man's salvation. This is the order, the rule and law of his house, and no man breaks that order and rule without suffering the penalty. Hence when we come to a door, and find it locked, (we mean, some mystery, or prophecy, which we cannot understand,) and it will not open upon our humble knocking, of itself; then let us at once conclude, this is not for me yet to know, or my heavenly Father would let me enter. I will be satisfied, with what I already know, and try to be more faithful with what I have thus far received, knowing that I have to render a strict account of the use of every gift or talent bestowed on me, and indeed, knowing my weakness and shortcomings, I should not crave or wish for more than to be faithful.

Yet beloved, we would feel to be unfaithful to our trust, if we were not to exhibit the order of the prophecies, whose fulfilment is looked for as being near at hand. The very pleasant idea with many professors of so-called christian denominations, as well as with the Jews, is, that Christ shall soon make his appearance, and establish his kingdom, the Millennium, on earth &c. &c. We will neither support nor refute this idea, but examine simply the word, which says, that the day of Christ shall not come, except there come a falling away first, & that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, 2 Thess. ii. 4. who evidently is the same with the beast that was, and is not,—and goeth into perdition; Rev. xvii. 11. to whom these *ten* kings, who have one mind, shall give their power and strength; (13.) these kings, while they have the power, shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire. (16.)

Again we read of two witnesses, who, shall prophesy not less than three years and a half, standing before the god of the earth (Rev. xi. 3. 4.) which appears to be the same man of sin, as 2 Thess. ii. who shall overcome them, and kill them. (7.) And again, if even five of the last seven plagues should be past, it is evident, that the sixth and the seventh is not yet past, for the way of

the kings of the East is not yet prepared; (xvi. 12.) those three unclean spirits, who are the spirits of devils, have not yet made their appearance, (though we might perhaps apprehend their approach in that rapping-humbug and other tokens;) they have not yet been naturalized, legalized and canonized by the mouth of the dragon, and the mouth of the beast, and the mouth of the false prophet; neither has that last plague yet come, which will be as universal as the air surrounds the globe!

Now, beloved, we leave it to your own judgment, if all these things have yet to come to pass, before the glorious appearance of our Lord, and even many more, as we might gather also from the scriptures, whether we have reason to look for blessed times of peace and plenty, &c. or whether the signs of the times do not rather give us a gloomy prospect of evil times before us?—May the Lord have mercy upon us. Here is the patience of the saints, and indeed we may call those blessed which die in the Lord *from henceforth.* "Yea, blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: for on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb." Blessed be God and the Lamb for evermore.

Communicated for the Visiter.

NO. 6.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

Exod. xx. 3.

Our design in presenting this subject for public contemplation is not to display our talents, as I am aware that they are very limited. The subject under consideration is one, upon which the community of professed christians is as much divided upon as any subject in the Bible, namely the Godhead of Jesus Christ. Our text says, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." That Jesus Christ possessed all the attributes of God, is a fact clearly proved in the Bible, which cannot be denied: he was the moving cause of all things visible & invisible, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." John i. 1. 10. 14.

There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one and the same, the one eternal God. The Spirit that moved upon the waters. The appellation of Father is given to God, because He is the moving cause of all things. The word that proceeded from the Father is to instruct the human mind, and to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. The Holy Ghost is also to comfort, hence says Jesus, I will send the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which shall guide you in the way of all truth. The appellation of "person" when applied to the divinity of Jesus, is absurd and is not to be found within the lids of the Bible, and the term 'person' is not or cannot be applied to the divinity of Jesus Christ. The term "Son" is only given to Jesus Christ in reference to his humanity, he therefore possessed humanity and divinity in his flesh.

He was called the seed of David. He shall be called the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. Rom. i. 4. In consequence of his miraculous incarnation and birth, he is called the Son of God. He was the Word, which God sent unto

the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all. Acts x. 36. For unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given, the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace; and of the increase of his government there shall be no end." The prophet in the above quotation gives the Son all the attributes of God; Isaiah ix. 6. hence he must be very God in equality.

In reference to his attributes, Jesus says, "Before the world was I was, and proceeded from the Father." Here in this quotation we discover, that Christ had no reference to his divinity as proceeding from the Father, but his humanity. As the appellation of 'Son' is given in many places to Christ, it only has reference to his humanity, and not to his divinity. As all other places in holy Writ, where the term 'Son' is made use of, (Col. i. 16. 17.) Jesus is the author of all things; for by him were all things created, visible and invisible, all things were created by him, and for him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made. In Him was life. There is none that can give life but God; this life is both physical and spiritual, for he raised the dead physically and healed the malady of the soul. John i. 3. 4.

His humanity suffered when upon the cross, whilst the divine nature sustained all the perfections of Deity; and after his glorious resurrection he ascended to heaven for us, that he might become the first fruits of them that slept. Therefore says the apostle, "He can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, that he might be a merciful High-priest." Heb. iv. 15. Christ is represented by the apostle Peter, 1 ep. iii. 22. as he who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God: angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him. And if all angels and all powers and authorities are subject to Christ, He is God.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Jesus under the figure of a Lamb is represented as being Lord of lords, & King of kings: and they that are with him are called chosen and faithful. Let us all try to meet him there! Wherefore, saith the apostle, God also has highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, & things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Now if our text is correct, which we know it is, when we bow to Christ, we bow to God. Phil. ii. 9. 10. Christ told the Scribes and Pharisees, that before Abraham was, I am. The term "I AM" was given to Moses to denote the person by whom he was sent to liberate the children of Israel, when God told him to say that I AM had sent him unto them. He applied that term to himself; then the word "I AM" means God. This would reconcile what Christ said to the scribes and pharisees, "Before Abraham was, I am—God manifested in the flesh."

God is a spirit, and first moved upon the waters, says divine revelation. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost, and these three are one. 1 John v. 7. Let us remember, that the term 'Son', where it is applied to Christ, has no reference to his divinity, but to his humanity. He is called the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

We sometimes hear some of the divines so-called to say, how much God suffered at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ Let us abide by the doctrine of the apostles, which is always the safest. The divine nature of Christ never suffered; for it could not suffer, neither could it die. Thanks be to God, that he ever sustained his divinity, whilst the flesh of Christ suffered to fulfil the demands of a broken and violated law. I came not to

destroy the law and the prophets, but that through me it might be fulfilled.—And when all things shall be fulfilled, all things will be subdued unto Christ; then the Son himself will be subject to the Father, that God may be all and in all.

Remember that 'Son' in this place as all other places in holy writ, has a reference to the humanity of Jesus Christ, and not to his divinity. It is therefore most positive, that his divine nature was never begotten from all eternity, as some of the clergy say, who presume to have more wisdom than the great I AM. Hear the language of the apostle Paul, "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, oh God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second, by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb. x. 7—10.

We discover here, that it was the body of Christ, and not his divinity, that suffered. We conclude from the testimony of the scriptures, that his body was made sin for us; he was made sin for us according to the scriptures; his body was offered, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Rom. viii, 3. 4.

H. K. M.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

JUDGMENT.

"But the heaven and the earth which are now by the same word are kept in store reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." There are many portions of the word of God, that declare that at some period not known to us, God will judge the world in righteousness. It is then that all men, both great and small, must stand before the bar of God, and render an account for the deeds done in the body, and those that have done their duty, will stand upon the right of the Judge, and meet his approving smile, and go with him to enjoy endless life; while all transgressors will be placed on his left hand, and they can meet no sweet smile from the righteous Judge, but their doom is, Depart from me into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels. And the heavens and the earth that now are, are kept in store for that awful day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, and then they are to be destroyed by fire. Now some say, the judgment-day is every day; but the heavens and the earth by the power of God are held in store for the day of judgment.

Thus we see, that there is a certain day appointed by God, and after the judgment-day they are to be burned up, and all wickedness is to be destroyed. And my dear unconverted friends, have you ever thought seriously upon standing before the great Judge of the quick and the dead to answer for every wicked action and every wicked thought of the heart? It is true, here you can think and do many things, that those around you may know nothing of; but they are all registered against you in the book of God's remembrance, and at that great and awful day, when Gabriel's trump shall sound in thunder-tones bidding the sleepers to rise from the four corners of the earth, and stand before the bar of the all-seeing eye; it is then your sins in all their blackness will be presented before you; then trembling and quaking you will have to bear the just and fiery indignation of your all-powerful Judge, and hear the awful command, 'Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity!'

There you may behold those, whose presence you have shunned here below, standing at the right hand of God clothed in robes of white and washed in the atoning blood of the Lamb. It is true, they may have been despised while here on earth, and while your company might have been sought by many; but in the end they are crowned with immortal life

and pleasure at God's right hand worlds without end, because in this life they've walked with God, and received evil at the hands of the world. But you have walked in the ways of the world, and received your good things here; from the hands of God you will receive everlasting pain. Then let us all endeavor to walk blameless before God, so that at the day of judgment we may stand with Christ and all the sanctified of God.

Great Judge of that day that will come,
When mortals must receive their doom,
Oh hear our cry and grant we may
Of thee find mercy in that day!

The awful summons shall go forth,
From East to West, from South to North,
Devils and men, to judgment come,
And hear your everlasting doom!

Think, oh my soul, thou must appear,
And pass the judgment at this bar;
What now does God & conscience say?
Wilt thou find mercy in that day!

Dost thou by faith to Jesus flee?
Is his dear image stamped on thee?
If so, let nothing thee dismay,
Thou shalt find mercy in that day.

Eternal Judge, Almighty Lord!
Seal home and bless thy solemn word,
And oh that we poor sinners may
Of thee find mercy in that day!

CEPHAS.

Communicated for the Visiter.

REGENERATION.

Dear brother in the Lord.

Your unworthy writer for the first time, feels a disposition to drop a few thoughts on the work of regeneration, a term used twice in the New Testament. Mat. xix. 28. Titus iii. 5.

In the first place I will give a few definitions:

1. *Generation*,—the act of begetting a race; a progeny; an age.

2. *Degenerate*,—to fall from the virtue of our ancestors, unworthy, base.

3. *Regenerate*,—to produce anew; to be born anew.

4. And lastly, *Regeneration*,—new birth: birth by grace.

Such are the definitions of the above terms, and when we consider how that God made man in his own image in the image of God created he him, just, pure, holy, and upright; but through his disobedience, the sin defiling power entered into the world, and so death by sin, hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Sin is the transgression of the law, 1 John iii. 4. Again to the text By regeneration is meant a new birth; that work of the holy Spirit, by which we experience a change of heart; it is to be distinguished from baptism which is an external rite, (i. e. a solemn act of religion,) though some have mingled them together. Nor does it signify a mere reformation of the outward conduct; nor a conversion from one sect or creed to another; or even from atheism;—nor are new faculties given in this change, nor does it consist in new revelations, succession of terrors or consolations; or any whisper as it were from God to the heart, concerning his secret love, choice or purpose to save us. It is expressed in scripture by being born again, John iii. 7. born from above, so it may be rendered John iii. 2—7—27. A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven; being quickened Eph. ii. 1-7. Even when we were dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) Christ formed in the heart, Gal. iv. 6. and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.

A partaking of the divine nature 2 Pet. i. 4. whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. The efficient cause of regeneration is the divine spirit, that man is not the author of it is evident, if we consider,

1. The case in which men are before it takes place; a state of ignorance and inability, John iii. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?—

2. The nature of the work shows plainly that it is not in the power of men to do it: it is called a creation, a production of a new principle which was not before, & which man could not himself produce, Eph. ii. 8. 10. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained or prepared that we should walk in them.

3. It is expressly denied to be of men, but declared to be of God. John i. 12—18. but as many as received him to them gave he power or the right of privilege to become the sons of God, even to them, that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 1 John iii. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

The instrumental cause if it may be so called, is the word of God, James i. 18. Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures; and 1 Cor. iv. 15. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many Fathers; in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel. The evidences of it are, conviction of sin, holy sorrow, deep humility, knowledge, faith, repentance, love and devotedness to God's glory. The properties of it are these:

1. It is a passive work (that is power of suffering,) and herein it differs from conversion. In regeneration we are passive, and receive from God; in conversion we are active, and turn to him.

2. It is an invincible work of God's grace, Eph. iii. 7. whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.—

3. It is an instantaneous act, for there can be no medium between life and death; and here it differs from sanctification, which is progressive.—

4. It is a complete act, & perfect in its kind; A change of the whole man. 2 Cor. v. 17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.—

5. It is a great and important act, both as to its author and effects, Eph. ii. 4. 5. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.—

6. It is an internal act, not consisting in bare outward forms. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 27. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.—

7. Visible as to its effects. 1 John iii. 14.—We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.

8. Delightful, pleasant, charming, 1 Pet. i. 8. whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.—

9. Necessary, needful, indispensably requisite; Jno. iii. 3. Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.—

10. It is an act, the blessings of which we cannot finally lose. John xiii. 1. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. Jer. xxxi. 3. "Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

Rev. i. 5. 6. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

P. R.

* * *

For the Visiter.

"*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.*" Col. iii. 1. 2.

We find that the above words were spoken by that highly inspired apostle, Paul. They were addressed to the saints and faithful brethren that were at Colosse at that time; those who obeyed the Gospel of Christ so far as the words of the text go, namely, those who repented of their sins and had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were risen with him in baptism through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

The apostle exhorted them to seek those things which are above, and consequently the same doctrine that the apostle taught the Colossians, will also be profitable unto all those who profess to be the followers of Christ; for we find that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 17.

But I feel my weakness and unworthiness to enter more largely on this all-important subject; Yet notwithstanding if I can say a word or two that might be profitable unto those that read these lines, and also edifying to myself, I will try by the assisting grace of God to make a few remarks; For I feel a desire in the welfare of my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord.

My dear friends, if we have come as far as declared in the words of the text, if we have been brought to see and to feel that we are sinners, that we had run counter to the will of high heaven, and that we had lost the communion and fellowship with God through disobeying the counsels of high heaven, and if we have now repented of our sins, and have been baptized upon our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and have thus come as far as declared in the words of the text, we are now to lay hold on eternal life, and to seek those things which are above.

If we have been admitted into the visible church in the course pursued as described above, we dare not now make a halt or stand in our religious career, but we are commanded to go on to perfection; we are now to seek and search the scripture, and there we can find all that God requires of us in order that we may be saved. Therefore we should take the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

We find that after the children of Israel were led out from Egypt, from under the bondage and thraldom of king Pharaoh, they went on until they came to the red sea, and here it appears they were in a strait; the sea was before their eyes, & behind them was Pharaoh with his host pursuing them; & they were conscious, that if they did not follow Moses their leader through the sea, they would again be taken captive by king Pharaoh, and hence we find that there opened a passage through the red sea, that they went over on dry ground, and when they were over, they looked back, and saw Pharaoh with his host drowning in the sea.

The Israelites rejoiced, and sang praises to God; they were now in the wilderness, and after a while we find that they murmured against God and against Moses and so on; and we find that out of that vast number that set out of the land of Egypt, only two entered

the land of Canaan; and what might be the reason of this? Why the reason was, disobedience to the commands of God given them through Moses, and thus it is with the children of God. After they have come out from under the bondage and thraldom of sin and Satan, and now like the Israelites rejoiced that their former enemies, namely, their sins were drowned in the sea of forgetfulness, and now they are as it were in the wilderness and Christ as their leader, and God has given commands and counsels by his Son, in order that we may keep in that course which Christ has marked out for us, which will lead us to the heavenly Canaan, if we strictly obey the commands of God.

But how often are the commands of God disobeyed, that we take not enough heed to the things which we have heard, when the apostle Paul so solemnly exhorts us, to seek those things which are above and to set our affections more on things above. Oh brethren and sisters, let me exhort you with me, that we may deny the things of this world more, that we may die more unto the things of this world and live unto Christ! Oh that we might all be more engaged in laying up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt them, and to set our affections more on things above! Oh what a pity it is, in beholding poor mortal man struggling and toiling in order to accumulate wealth, and it is to be feared, that the one thing needful is often forgotten & neglected thereby! Oh it is dangerous to have our minds too much engaged on worldly affairs! How many inducements the world holds out to us, and if we are not very careful, we may soon be drawn into some snare, yea before we are aware of it, and might thereby be drawn away from the truth; and oh what a pity it would be, if one should thus be drawn away from the truth through the allurements of this world! Christ said therefore, be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. But I must come to a conclusion, lest I take up too much room; a word or two more, let us become more separate from the children of this world, and to let our lights shine that others may yet be brought from darkness to light; oh let all be faithful unto Christ our leader, so that when all transitory things shall come to a close with us here on earth, that we might then be permitted to enter into the heavenly Canaan, into the rest which God has prepared for his people. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things which God hath prepared for those that love him.

T. M.

For the Visiter.

FAITH.

(Concluded.)

I have already been trying to show in my other article that I wrote last that faith without works is dead being alone, yet I have not proved it satisfactory with all the testimony that can be selected from the word of God. For I am not able to give all the testimony, that can be selected from the word of God, while I am only a babe in Christ Jesus; therefore I would be rejoiced to see some one of my brethren, to take up the subject and make it satisfactory. Some one who is able and capable.

I shall give a few testimonies on faith and its nature. We find that Paul was speaking to the Galatians, and he wanted to know whether they received the spirit by works of the law or by hearing of faith! He therefore, that ministereth to you the spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith, even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham, and the scriptures

foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed."

So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. For it is written, Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them. Gal. iii. 10.

A wise man will hear and will increase learning, and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsel. Prov. i. 5. Turn you at my reproof; behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you, verse 23. Because I have called and ye refuse, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. verse 28. 29. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them about thy neck, write them upon the table of thy heart, so shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man; trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding in all thy ways, acknowledge him and he shall direct thy path. chap. iii, 1.

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident; for the just shall live by faith, and the law is not of faith. But the man that doeth them shall live in them. Gal. iii. 12. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith, which should afterwards be revealed; wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. verse 24. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, (26.) Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God to walk in his ways and to fear him. Deut. viii. 6. Beware, that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee. verse 11.

Oh let us watch and be careful that we be not deceived, so that we may keep close to the word of God, and feel willing to obey the same at all times, showing that our faith is a living faith by our walk and conduct and conversation, so that our faith is not like a tree that blossoms in the spring of the year and yields no fruit through the season.

This puts me in mind of such persons that are all faith, and not much work or none about them; yes we have often seen the like, that trees had been filled with blossoms, but the blossom fell off, and no fruit was found thereon, O barren professor when will you awake to a sense of your duty, and when will you partake.

Now let us see, what Moses said to Israel, And now Israel, what doeth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. Deut. x. 12. And (a curse) if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way. chap. xi. 28. Here we see how strictly they had to obey under the Mosaical Law.

But if we have respect to persons we commit sin; for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James ii. 10. &c. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say, he hath faith, and have not works; Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things, which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works. Show me thy faith without thy works,

and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest, that there is one God; thou doest well, the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham justified by works, when he had offered his son Isaac upon the altar?

Now we see how faith and works wrought together, and by works was faith made perfect. We see then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only; now let us examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith; and prove our ownselves, and see whether we are the true followers of Christ, or whether we are reprobates.

J. B.

FIRST STEP TO RUIN.

"My first step to ruin," exclaimed a wretched youth as he lay tossing from side to side on the straw bed in one corner of his prison-house,—"my first step to ruin was going fishing on the Sabbath. I knew it was wrong; my mother taught me better, my minister taught me better, my master taught me better, my Bible taught me better. I did not believe them; but I did not think it would come to this. Oh! I am undone, I am lost."—

Dear reader, perhaps he said, It is so unpleasant to be cooped up in church. What harm is there in taking a stroll in the woods? What harm in carrying my fishing-tackle and sitting on the banks to fish? Do you ask what harm? Why the harm is, that God is disobeyed, who says, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

Ah yes, the moment a youth determines to have his own way, choosing his own pleasure before God's will, that moment he lets go his rudder, his compass, his chart; nothing but God's word can guide you safely over the ocean of life. Give that up, and you get bewildered, you are drifting, you will be lost.

But remember if your parents have taught you better; if they have tried patiently to guide your feet in the path of virtue and holiness, and you still run contrary to their will; I say, remember your parents will not have to give an account for the many faults and crimes you have committed. No, but you will have to stand before the bar of God there to render an account of the deeds done in your own body. Reflect then one moment, before you take the first step, and believe me your well-wisher

L. D.

DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.—

A young man was sentenced to the South Carolina penitentiary for four years. When he was about to be sentenced, he stated publicly that his downward course began in disobedience to his parents—that he thought he knew as much of the world as his father did, and needed not his aid or advice, but that as soon as he turned his back upon his home, then temptations came around him like a *drove of hyenas*, and hurried him on to ruin. There is no place so safe and happy as a good home.

A little girl, six years old, in a Sunday school, was repeating the fifth commandment. Her teacher endeavored to show her in what way she was to honor her parents, and said, "You must honor your parents by obeying them." "O, ma'am," exclaimed the child, "I cannot keep that commandment.' "Why cannot you keep it, my dear?" "Because, ma'am, when my mother tells me to do one thing, my father tells me to do another. Now, just before I came here, my mother told me to stay up stairs and learn my lesson, and my father told me to come down and play: now how could I obey them both? No, no," closing her little hands as if in despair, "no, no, ma'am, it is impossible for me ever to keep that commandment." In such a case, however, a child should obey the father unless he bade her to commit some sin. Neither father or mother should be obeyed then,

QUESTIONS PUT TO AND ANSWERED BY OUR BRETHREN 140 YEARS AGO.

Continued from page 43.

Qu. 25. Whether the apostles have ever forbidden, to exercise the necessary spiritual and bodily assistance of charity toward one in the ban?

Ans. The apostles have never forbidden to exercise the necessary spiritual and bodily assistance to the excommunicated, but we are to call them to repentance, and if they do not hear or receive it, we are clear. Even so with temporal things; when we have plenty, and they are wanting, then we should communicate according to their necessity.

Qu. 26. Whether their, the New Baptist's ban ever, like that of the apostles, had a divine effect and influence on those in the ban?

Ans. We believe undoubtedly, that the ban upon all, whom we put in it according to the word of the Lord, has an inward effect and influence here, and will be made known outwardly in the day of revelation, if they do not repent in this time of grace. But that men should immediately fall down dead like Ananias, such has not happened yet, and it is to be read of only once of the apostles. There were probably many put in the ban by the apostles, yet none any more died thus outwardly. Notwithstanding however the power of the ban will have been fulfilled in them sufficiently.

Qu. 27. Whether true and essential regeneration was inseparably connected with water-baptism?

Ans. Regeneration in its essence is nothing else but true and essential obedience towards God, and toward all his commandments, and one that is regenerated will even say with Christ, Matth. iii. 15. "For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." And we can answer thus, that the will or obedience in regard to water-baptism is inseparable from true regeneration; but if from necessity, and not from contempt or disobedience water-baptism should not be performed, it would not destroy regeneration.

Qu. 28. Whether all those that were baptized of them, had also been born anew of God in truth at the same time?

Ans. That would indeed be a good baptism, if all those whom we baptize in water, would be new-born men, which however cannot be proven neither of Christ, nor of his apostles, that all they did baptize, did turn out well. But where there is true faith, & by faith the word in the washing of water is accepted or received, there taketh place an essential regeneration or purification in the washing of water by the word. Eph. v. 26.

Qu. 29. Whether one could not be truly regenerated, even before he was baptized, inasmuch water-baptism does not give true and essential regeneration, as they themselves cannot deny?

Ans. Adam was created in Paradise in the image of God, after his own likeness; but when he became disobedient to his God, he lost all his glory, and had to undergo, on account of his disobedience, the curse and death. Thus a man may have attained to a good part of regeneration before water-baptism; but if he doth not become still more obedient and still less in himself, then he may very easily lose again those things which he may have wrought. And it is to the new creature her meat, to live & grow thereby, that she truly obeys her Lord Jesus. If she does not eat this meat, (which however was the meat of the new creature, John iv. 34.) but eateth the serpent's meat, which is disobedience in manifold wisdom and prudence

contrary to the word, then will be her lot like Adam's in Paradise. Now since water-baptism is commanded by Christ, therefore a person that is regenerated must bow in obedience, and fulfil this righteousness.

Qu. 30. Whether the true brotherhood of Christians is not founded rather on regeneration than on water-baptism?

Ans. The true brotherhood of Christians has been founded always upon true faith and obedience toward the Lord Jesus, and toward his Gospel. Therefore the true brethren of Christ have never been able to refuse outward water-baptism; because they saw the example in their first-born brother, and he had also commanded it unto them; and he, Christ himself, declares only those for his brethren, who do the will of God. Matt. xii. 50.

Qu. 31. Whether we are not in duty bound, to hold those, who can prove their regeneration indeed before God & men, for brethren, though they have not been baptized again? See Matt. xii. 49. 50.

Ans. Those who prove their new-birth indeed before God and man, we hold as brethren, but they will also not oppose themselves to water-baptism, but be willing to be baptized according to their faith and inward desire. For Christ has also held only those for his brethren, who were his disciples and baptized. Look rightly at Matt. xii. 49. 50.

Qu. 32. Whether they can say before the face of Jesus Christ, the all-knowing searcher of hearts and Judge of the living and the dead, that they themselves were always of one heart and of one soul?

Ans. This is not required of God, that we should be already of one heart and of one soul perfectly. Therefore we also cannot say, that we are so in reality. But yet in will we must be so, namely that we will labor after another, till we all come in the unity of faith and to the union in perfect faith of which it is spoken, Ephes. iv. 11—13. Neither will any man be able to say, that the church in Jerusalem were in perfection as of one heart and of one soul, but in the beginning they were united to follow Christ, denying all earthly things. But that they were yet quite different in knowledge, is to be noted from Acts xv. 5. &c. since from this very church in Jerusalem those went out, and taught otherwise than the apostles taught concerning circumcision; and the apostles had great trouble to preserve union. It is therefore to be marveled, that such a perfect union is required of us in these perilous times, where obscurity and darkness have covered all nations, while yet those, who glory in their inward spiritual baptism, are so divided, that even with regard to the plain and clear command of water-baptism there appears nothing but uncertainty and disunion among them, as also in other chief points of faith.

Qu. 33. Whether they do not deem their churches as better than those of all other Baptists of the present and past times? And wherein? For what?

Ans. That we consider our church better as that of the present Baptists whom we know as having fallen away, is true; and indeed for this reason, because they are fallen away in life and doctrine, and deviated far from the doctrine and life of the ancient Baptists, which many among them see and lament. Of those Baptists that were before us however we cannot say any thing, because we did not know them in their life. But as regards the doctrine, we are altogether united with those, who taught nothing contrary to the Gospel.

Qu. 34. What is the foundation of their opinion, that their newly-establish-

ed church, order of baptism and ban &c. be like unto that of the apostles, since they cannot show for themselves a like divine call, nor gifts, nor effects?

Ans. Regarding the power to work miracles, we deem ourselves far, very far behind the apostles, and quite unworthy (to compare ourselves with them). But in regard to doctrine and mind we must pray God, that he would make us like-minded with his apostles, yea even with his Son Jesus.

Qu. 35. Whether their teachers and overseers are able and dare to bring the testimony of their conscience before God, that the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers in their churches, to feed them as the churches of God? And whether they have and can prove those necessary spiritual gifts required 2 Cor. vi. &c.?

Ans. Before God they must of course be able to bring it; otherwise they are no true shepherds. But when men do not believe it, should not concern them, nor make them sorry; but they should rather rejoice, if their name is cast out as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Luke vi. 22.

Qu. 36. Whether they must not confess before God upon their souls, that many among them were much more charitable, meek, humble &c. before their baptism, than since?

Ans. Hereupon we say, No, unless it be said of those, who have been cut off as dead branches; or also, if that feigned (whited) love is meant, where hypocrisy is exercised by one towards another for the sake of bread, or favor, where sin and error is not rebuked, but said, "*Let me have my own will, my own opinion, and my own way, and I will let you have yours too; yet we will love one another, and be brethren.*" *) If this is meant, then we confess, it is true, and that we, alas! long enough have stood under such a destructive, hypocritical love, while we were yet among the Pietists. But now we have learned such a love, and have yet to learn, which hateth and rebuketh sin and evil.

Qu. 37. Whether they have not commenced and thus far continued their new baptism with much uncertainty & changeableness; also proved the same in other things, inasmuch as for example they have rejected the use of matrimony at one time, and at another approved of it again; cast aside labor now, and then again sought after?

Ans. The baptism of our Lord Jesus, according to his institution, we have commenced in great assurance of faith, and God has hitherto preserved and confirmed us therein by his grace under much opposition, that we can assuredly say, "those that believe shall be baptized." But that we, after baptism, had to confer together about matrimony, labor and more other points, is true, because we were, before our baptism, and while we yet were among the Pietists, not otherwise taught by those, who were considered great saints. In consequence therefore we had much difficulty, before we got rid of the error imbibed.

Qu. 38. By what are we to know the undoubted divinity of their new church before all others in the whole world?

Ans. We have indeed no new church, neither any new laws; but we desire only, to remain in simplicity and true

*) Reader, take notice of this, and see, whether this kind of love and brotherhood has not become the fashion of our day among the so-called pious Christians of most all denominations, and oh, dear brother, if you find something of this leaven of insincerity in your own heart and conversation, beware, we beseech you, and purge it out that the Lord may not finally spue thee out. Rev. iii. 16.

faith with the old church, which Christ has instituted in his blood, and to follow (obey) that commandment which was from the beginning. Neither do we ask at all, that men should acknowledge the undoubted divinity in our church; but we wish, that the undoubted divinity might be known indeed in Christ himself, and then in the church at Jernsalem. And if this were known, and the divinity of doctrine, words and commandments, which they had;—and then it must be seen, whether a church hath that same divine doctrine among them. Yea if this is understood, we think it would be sufficient to know a church from all other churches in the whole world, when she, as a faithful wife is subject unto her husband CHRIST in his commandments, and is constantly laboring to become more and more subject. But he, who has not yet learned Christ in the divinity of his authority, oh! he will also certainly not know his church, if even the twelve apostles were the bishops and teachers in the same.

Qu. 39. Whether they were themselves assured, and had received the unshaken confidence of it already in the divine trial by fire throughout, that also God himself knows them as such, and would have men to know them thus; and how they would undertake to make it evident and credible?

Ans. The assurance indeed must be before God, as Paul describes, Rom. v. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." This assurance however has promise no longer, even in the apostles as given by the Lord Jesus, John xv. 7. but as long as they would abide in Him, and his words would abide in them, so long they would be his true disciples, and whatever they shall ask, shall be done unto them. And thus it remaineth (true): *"He that shall endure in the doctrine of Jesus unto the end, the same shall be saved."*

These are the most pressing questions, which we have deemed necessary to lay before you, dear friends! concerning your new baptism and church at this time as well for your own sake, as for the sake of others: upon which you may now reflect, and make your united, plain and upright declaration, adding your reasons, in such a manner, as you may in such an important matter undertake to answer before the face of Jesus Christ, and all his holy angels and elect, in that day which is certainly coming of closest scrutiny of this your work begun, without contradiction of his Spirit in your conscience or that of others.

Beloved friends!

Upon your request and sharp questions, which you have laid before us in these 39 points before God on our good conscience, we have given out in love these answers on every point, according to our faith and good conscience before that God, who has sent out of love his Son into the world, for that purpose, that we should hear him, believe on him, and by faith in him have everlasting life. Now if you also love your (soul's) well-being and salvation, oh then hasten and bow also your neck under the sceptre of this great King; believe, that his doctrine is true, and that his baptism is beneficial and unto salvation for poor sinners.

Say not, "What can water help me?" and do not console yourselves by any means with your infant-baptism, which has deen introduced into the world contrary to the word of God; else this simple testimony (which upon urgent

request was given out by the Baptists in Schwarzenau) will have to be also a testimony together with your own conscience against yourselves at the great day of judgment of the Lord Jesus who will come in flaming fire taking vengeance on all that have not obeyed his Gospel. Now unto the Lamb that was slain and that alone hath power and dominion in heaven and on earth, to Him be honor, and glory, and praise for ever and ever. Yea, Amen. He cometh in the clouds, and all eyes shall see Him, and those who have pierced Him. Amen.

Given out at Schwarzenau, in the month of July, in the year of Christ 1713.

For the Visiter.

LETTER FROM PALESTINE.

Artos near Bethlehem April 26th 1852.

Dear parents.

After a voyage and journey of over four months we arrived safely in Bethlehem, where our Saviour was born. We resided about one week there; then our dear friend *Meshullam* invited us to come and live in his family in the valley near Bethlehem, where his farm and gardens are. Br. M. received us very kindly, and seems like a father to us. The valley looks beautiful; we have already corn, potatoes and beans up, and many other kinds of vegetables. M. has also different kinds of fruit-trees, peach-trees, figs, pears, pomegranates, prunes, lemons, which are mostly young trees, just beginning to bear, which however yield a great quantity of fruit, which is of great value, and brings a high price in this hitherto desolate land.

The whole valley is watered by a large spring of excellent water, which in ancient times was carried by an aqueduct to supply water to the well at the gate of Bethlehem, which David so much longed for. See 1 Chron. xi. 16. 17. About a mile from our house are the three great pools of Solomon, which are still in good order, and even now supply water by means of the old stone aqueduct to Bethlehem and Jerusalem, which is about seven miles from here.

These things make me see and realize that I am in the land of the Bible, where the patriarchs and prophets, and also our blessed Saviour lived and died. We have not yet had time to visit the many interesting places in and about Jerusalem, but hope to tell you about them another time. I often heard mother speak about the cedars of Lebanon and the plains of Sharon, which now my eyes have seen.

The mountains of Lebanon which I saw from Beyroot are grand and beautiful. Their tops covered with snow, while on their sides are scattered villages and trees. As we sailed from Beyroot along the sea-coast to Jaffa, we saw the country was very fine, yet almost without inhabitants. Jaffa is situated on the wide plains of Sharon, which extend many miles along the coast, and far back from the sea. As we rode over them from Jaffa on our way here, we found every where a rich soil covered with wild grass and flowers; and here and there patches of wheat and barley, and a few groves of olives, but without a single house for many miles.

Jaffa is surrounded with many fields of oranges, lemons, bananas, apricots, quinces; the tall palm-tree bearing large clusters of red dates and other fruit-trees. We visited one orange-grove, containing hundreds of trees all bending to the ground with the largest and best oranges I ever tasted. Some

weighed one pound and a quarter, and measured 14 inches round. The whole scene looking almost like a paradise. As I walked on the house-top, I remembered that it was in this place that PETER had his great vision. (Jaffa is the present name of old JOPPA.)

Here our sea-voyage was at an end, and although the Lord had kept us from all dangerous storms and evils, yet we were glad to rest once more on the shore, as the constant motion of the vessel made me feel most always unwell. But yet the voyage has done me much good as my health is better than before. After we left Marseilles, we were detained a few days at a small city in the south of France, and also in Greece; but I have not space to tell you all the particulars as I should like. I often think how I should love to tell you about the many things I have seen, and also how we are situated here.

Although we have not all the conveniences that we had in America, yet we have many things better than we expected. But we did not come for worldly comfort, but with the hope of doing some good to the many poor in this land. Last week we visited with brother Meshullam some of our neighbors, the Arabs. They live in old ruins, tombs or caves; they have no furniture, and only a blanket, which they spread on the ground-floor; on this they eat and sleep.

Only a few years ago they were idle thieves and robbers; but now M. has taught them how to cultivate the land, and to be quiet, honest people. These as well as all the tribes around here love him much, and are learning from his example to be industrious and honest. Sister M. made a small english cheese from goats-milk, which she showed to one of the great sheiks or chiefs. Soon after he sent his men to tell us that he would gather his thousands of sheep & goats from the plains of Jordan, and bring them within a mile of Artos, and make his men milk them for us, and we must bring a tent, and make all the cheese we want as a present, and sister and I expect to go next week.

Meshullam has got 50 goats, which supply us with butter and milk; he has also 3 oxen, 2 cows, 2 horses, and 2 donkeys. Br. M. expects to build three rooms for us before winter, but during the summer he has prepared a place under the side of a mountain, half sheltered by rocks and four large figtrees, where we shall pitch our tents to sleep in.

Dear mother, I often think of you & pray for you, and no doubt you do the same, if you are alive yet, as I have not heard from you a long time, but I hope these lines will find you all in good health and spirits. Oh how good the Lord is! He has brought me seven thousand miles safe here. Praise him, oh my soul! My dear parents, brother and sisters. Oh may we live so that when the Lord comes, we may all meet together with joy and not with grief. I often think of that time; what a joy it will be, when the Lord comes to call his children home, to be with him for ever!

I must come to a close very shortly, for the letter will have to go to-day to Jerusalem in order to be sent on. You undoubtedly have seen the letter sister M. wrote to be published, in which she has given all the particulars of our journey and arrival. We have many visiters coming from all parts of the world, and some are much interested in our undertaking, and even envy our position. But our hope and trust is only in God. I must say farewell with much love to you, my dear parents, and Moses, and

Leah &c. Write as soon as you get this, and tell me all the news.

Pray much for me your most affectionate daughter

LYDIA SCHULER.

* * *

FOR THE VISITER.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN A YOUNG MAN AND A CHRISTIAN.

CHRISTIAN. My dear young companion, through love I feel constrained to talk to you upon a subject near my heart, that is, the great need you have of the saving faith of the Gospel; for you are certainly aware, that if you die in your sins, where Christ is, you cannot come; then let us be up, and do our duty, and obey God and his commandments, which is the whole duty of man.

YOUTH. But, sir, there are so many things, that hinder me from taking your advice, which I believe is good in some respects. I believe, that it would be better for me, to remain as I am, at least for the present. In the first place I desire to be wealthy, and at the present I want to devote my time and my mind to seek an ample store of this world's goods, and would it not be better to defer this seeking God till these things be obtained?

CHRISTIAN. My dear friend, this is but one of the ways Satan takes to deceive us and keep us from coming unto the Lord. But we are to resist the devil, & he will flee from us; and we are called to seek the kingdom of God first, and then will all the rest be added unto us. And if after a life spent in toil, care & vexations, we gather together a large amount of this world's goods, and have every thing in the greatest plenty around us; yes, we may have fine and showy furniture, and ride in splendid, costly and fashionable equipages; yet the rust may corrode, and the moth corrupt; the midnight robber may break through and steal, the fire may consume, and the flood destroy all these fine things of this world, and then our treasure, that has held our heart in captivity, being gone, our labor and trouble and also the joy we had in these things are gone, and we are left the victims of fell despair. But you may say these calamities are but accidental, and they may never befall you. But still your love of this world's goods must fail you, and leave you the victim of dark hopeless despair; for you must soon leave them, and your head must be laid beneath the clod of the valley, and the soul of the prince goeth forth as naked, as that of the way-side beggar, and all your ill-gotten wealth will be but thorns in your side to sink you deeper into perdition. Then hearken to the voice of inspiration, and lay you up treasure in heaven, and let this be your first motive, and then if God sees fit in his infinite wisdom to add unto you wealth of this world, endeavor to use it as a thing bestowed upon you by being thankful to the author for conferring so many blessings upon you. Yes this inheritance, that is laid up in heaven for all those that love the appearance of the Lord, is indeed a treasure worth contending for, because it will be an endless inheritance, and it cannot be taken from us. Nothing can corrupt it; sorrow forms no part of it; but it is an inheritance of peace, love and unbounded joy. Well might those of old go willingly to the stake, and offer their bodies to the flames; for they would sooner gain access to that blessed inheritance reserved for all those that love the Lord. Then, my dear friend, be persuaded to seek for those true riches, which will be the

means of destroying the sting of death, and gain you a complete victory over all the host of darkness. Then with the poet say,

Dear Saviour I am thine
By everlasting bands;
My name, my heart I will resign,
My soul is in thy hands.

Youth. But sir, you must admit that it is our duty to lay up something for our families, so that we may at least make a decent living in this world. And then I see no particular need of my becoming a christian yet. I am young, of a robust constitution, in which there is but few if any symptoms of disease, so that in ten years from now, there will be time for me to prepare for the enjoyments of the future state of happiness.

Christian. Dear friend, it is indeed our christian duty to labor with our hands for our own support and those depending on us; for Paul tells us, that he that will not provide for his own family, is worse than an infidel; and Paul shows us also a pattern, for he supported himself, and this is the duty of all to do so. But still we must not give our whole soul to this, but devote that in prayer to the Lord, and he will bless us so, that we will be able to walk as he has required of us. But, my dear friend, you must beware how you harden your heart before the Lord, or he may deal sadly with you; for he has bought you with a dear price, the price of his own heart's blood, and he wants you now to devote your youthful fire and energy in his blessed service.

Now let me appeal to you, if you were cast into the waters of some mighty river, from whence to extricate yourself, would be impossible, and there you saw nothing but death staring you in the face, while you might in fancy see your father and mother weeping tears of real sorrow at the untimely fate of their son; while all these bitter thoughts were flashing through your mind, and your strength failing, and you begin to sink down, down in the dark billows. Suppose then some hand had seized you, he bears you up out of the water, he leads you unto the shore, and presents you to your dear friends, who are now frantic with joy, would you not love that friend? Would you not from the heart feel grateful to such a friend, who had risked his life for you?—Yes he would be cherished as one of your best friends.

Well, Christ has done more than this for you. You were lost with all of Adam's posterity beneath the dark waves of sin; you had broken the known law of God, therefore the Justice of God had condemned you from him. Yes, dark and forlorn would be our condition, if Christ had not laid a plan whereby we could be saved. Yes, in due time he left the glory he had with the Father, and came into this sinful world of ours, and became a being of grief for our sake, and at last for our sins he spilt his blood on Calvary for to show us a way to save us from beneath the dark wave of the great river of sin. Yes, when human arms had all failed, the Lord with his almighty arm brought us salvation.

Now will you let your heart be stained with the sin of darkest ingratitude to this Being, that has saved you from the darkest despair, by saying, you will spend your youth and best days in sin, and by running counter to the will of God? Will you let your best friend, the one too, that would stick closer than a brother, call upon you to love him & not heed his call, but try to put him off till some other period more suitable to yourself? Oh the deep ingratitude! Yes, write upon that heart Ingrate,

Ingrate. Why will you thus rush blindly down to ruin? For life is uncertain, and death is sure, and ere another morning's sun gild the eastern sky, your boasted form may lay cold in death, and your soul be where the fire is not quenched, and the worm dieth not; for thus end the pleasures of this transient world.

But if you will but come unto this friend, as he desires in his blessed word, even then if you will be called to pass through the shadow of death, his power will uphold you and keep you safe, and land you where there is forever fullness of joy at the right hand of God.

Come and taste along with me
Consolations running free,
From the Father's gracious throne
Flowing through his only Son.

Saints in glory sing aloud,
When they see an heir of God,
Coming in at heaven's door,
Making up the number more.

When this truth to me appears,
It removes my doubts and fears;
The more come in with free good will,
Make the banquet sweeter still.

(To be continued.)

* * *

For the Gospel-Visiter.

REPENTANCE.

Dear brother in the Lord.

Feeling to communicate a few lines to the Visiter, I shall take the word *repentance* for a few remarks.

What is repentance?—In order to evangelic repentance we must have

First. A knowledge of sin.
Secondly. A hatred to sin.
Thirdly. Sorrow for sin.
Fourthly. Confession of sin.
Fifthly. Renunciation of sin.

Now we see it requires first an inward conviction that we are sinners, and the greatest difficulty we have, is to convince men, what sin is. Sin is the transgression of the law. This is admitted by all, that the transgression of the law of God is sin. But it is also sin, to omit what is commanded as well as to do what is forbidden. To do what is commanded, and leave undone what is forbidden, is serving God and showing love to Christ. And that which is directly opposed, is infidelity and the service of the enemy.

But there is another class of men who profess to obey all the commandments, (or the essential ones at least;) yet they differ with what we read in the Gospel in regard to time and manner of observing these commandments and ordinances. They appoint their own time and their own manner of observing God's positive commandments; consequently they are not observing the commandments of God, but the traditions of men, by which the commandments of God are set at naught. Hence the apostle John would say, they are neither cold nor hot; it were better they were cold or hot, than lukewarm. The unconverted heathen is no worse than the perverted professor.

Repentance is also a change of mind and a heart-felt sorrow for sin committed. The fruits of repentance is reformation of life which will be seen, (not in the heart,) but on the outside, as the trees in one season of the year all look as though they were dead, but the time is close at hand when the sap will commence to spring up through the heart, and out in the branches; then it will become visible to the eye that that tree is alive. First it will produce the bud, then the blossom, then the fruit. The fruit will be found on the outside of the tree, on the branches, but brethren and sisters, remember the fruit is there, but it is not yet perfect; it grows unto per-

fection. Let us try more earnestly to imitate and not to stand still!

What is sin? The Lord said, Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Moses also declared, that the Lord, the God of Israel, shall raise a Prophet like unto me; him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he sayeth unto you. Now the transgression or omission of any of the commands of that Prophet is sin. We dare not add nor diminish. He that offends in one point is guilty of the whole. We cannot serve two masters. Jesus wants the whole heart. Christ and Belial have no communion, neither hath light and darkness.

One sin caused our first parents to lose the image of God, and we cannot obtain it so long as we live in known sin. We must repent of it and reform. Faith and repentance saves them, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. The word of God is truth and life; it is the good seed. The word of God liveth and abideth and endureth forever. Every man's work will be tried by fire. The word of God or the silver and gold will stand the fire. But the wood, hay and stubble, or the commands of men will be consumed.

The word of God calls for faith and repentance to make the disciples inwardly in heart to cleanse the inside by repentance, to make the new creature by faith. Then comes baptism for the remission of sin. Baptism is the sign and seal of the covenant, made in the heart with God, and according to the word of God. But the covenant and the seal are inseparably connected. Hence infant-baptism without faith and repentance is a tradition of man. Therefore repent and reform, and be baptized and wash away thy sins. Wash not the head only, but the body washed in water and the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience.

Being born of water and of the spirit and of the word of God, then to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, feet-washing, the kiss of charity, &c. Render evil to no man; condescend to men of low estate; mind not high things; let your pride be humility inside and outside. Let your light shine. Adorn yourselves in modest apparel; not with braiding of hair, or gold, or costly array, but learn of Jesus meekness and humility; follow him in the regeneration; not stand still for fear of going back, or be not conformed to the world but be transformed by the renewing of the mind. What the apostles said, are not the words of the apostles, but the words of God by inspiration. Go not to law with brethren. Love to God and love to the church is one and the same. Whosoever loveth him that begot will love him that is begotten of him.

D. L.

Selected for the Visiter.

THE BLESSED GOSPEL-RULE.

For the promotion and restoration of harmony and peace there is not a more important rule than this in the Bible, and few so little heeded. Were it regarded, probably the fire of strife would be speedily extinguished in ninety-nine cases of dissension out of every hundred. The prosperity of churches, the honor of religion, the peace of individuals, and the comfort of families, would all be advanced. But instead of obeying this plain and positive law, the generality of those who profess religion act as if there were no such law in the Bible.

Some, instead of expostulating in the spirit of Christ with an offending friend,

complain of the real or fancied injury till the report, with a hundred exaggerations, spreads through half a town. At the same time they greedily drink in every evil report respecting the person who has injured them; to these again they give circulation, and thus become a hundred times more guilty than he whom they make an offender for a word, or even for a much more serious injury. Thus they injure the cause of religion, and load their own souls with sin. For, first, they are guilty of rebellion against Christ.

He says about an offending brother, Go and tell him his fault between thee and him ALONE; instead of that, they tell any body or every body except the offender, and thus trample under foot the law of God. Were they to plunge into idolatry or drunkenness, they could but rebel against the Son of God, and they who make light of this solemn law of his are as truly rebels against him.

The evil reports they greedily receive are most probably in a great degree false and when they circulate these falsehoods they become guilty of scandal and lying. In connection with this they are guilty of indulging the worst and most hellish passions of the human heart, rancor, malice, and resentment: if they did not indulge these hell-born passions, they would not lend a pleased and attentive ear to every idle tale against an offending friend; nor be pleased, if that person had been ever so wrong, to publish his shame: they see the mote in their brother's eye, but they have a beam in their own.

Others pursue a different course, but a course of rebellion as real, though not carried to the same extent, against the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of taking the steps with an offending friend which he ordains, they sit down with sullen pride, and resolve to have no more to do with him. Instead of going and telling him his fault in private, and in the spirit of Christian affection, they at once treat him as "a heathen man and a publican." The rebellion in such cases against the authority of the Lord is as complete as in the former. Nothing can be more opposite than this law and their conduct.

This wicked conduct is often rendered still more wicked, from the flagrant fact that it is often indulged where there is no clear evidence that a brother has been an offender, and where perhaps there is nothing but vague report; yet instead of inquiring into the truth of this report, it is at once assumed to be correct, and that course of wickedness commences which has now been faintly delineated.

If you are one that thus trample under foot the authority of Christ, that pay no attention to his positive law on this subject, mock him no longer with the title of your Lord and Saviour, while you are a real rebel against him; but go and join the ranks to which you belong; the ranks of his enemies, the swearers, the drunkards, the liars, the scoffers, the blasphemers: they are but rebels, and while you neglect this precept, when a brother has offended you, you are as really a rebel as they, and perhaps a worse enemy; they are open enemies, not traitors in disguise. Rather let me say to you, if you have acted the part I have described, deplore your sin. Flee to the blood of sprinkling, and resolve that, in this respect, and every other, the laws of Christ shall govern you.

THOUGHTS.

It is not every broken heart which constitutes the sacrifice of God. It depends on what has broken it—whether the experience of misfortune, or the sense of sin—the sorrow of the world, or the sorrow of God. Both break the heart, but it is a different fracture in one case from what it is in the other. God values the latter; and hearts so broken he mends and makes whole.

Some sinners repent with an *unbroken* heart. They are *sorry*, and yet go on, as did Pilate and Herod.

A sinner must *come to himself*, as did the prodigal, before ever he will come to Christ.

The consummation of madness is to do what, at the time of doing it, we intend to be afterwards sorry for; the deliberate and intentional making of work for repentance.

When a Christian backslides, it is as if the prodigal son had re-acted his folly, and left his father's house a second time.

There is a mighty difference betwixt feeling "I have done wrong," and feeling "I have sinned *against* the Lord."

Some sinners lay down their burdens elsewhere than at the feet of Jesus.

Ministers should aim in preaching to *puncture* the heart rather than *tickle* the ear.

He who waits for repentance, waits for what cannot be had so long as it is waited for. It is absurd for a man to wait for that which he has himself to do.

Human friends can weep with us when we weep, but Jesus is a friend, who, when he has wept with us, can wipe away all our tears. And when the vale of tears terminates in the valley of the shadow of death, and other friends are compelled to retire and leave us to go alone, Jesus is the friend who can and will enter and go all the way through with us.

It is better for us that Christ should be in heaven than on earth. We need him more there than here. We want an advocate *at court*.

OBITUARY.

Died in the bounds of MAHONING-church, Ohio, June 30th, 1854, Br. DANIEL LONGENECKER, aged 79 years, 5 months and 10 days. He lived to see most all of his children, together with their partners, and a goodly number of his grand-children being members of the church of Christ, trying to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, and he died full of years, and it is hoped in the assurance of that faith, which he so long professed. At his funeral part of the second epistle of John, (v. 4—8.) were read and commented upon, particularly the last verse: "*Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*"

Communicated.

Departed this life in the bounds of ARMSTRONG church, Pa. brother JESSE SHOEMAKER, after a short illness, supposed to be bilious cholic, on the 23th of July last. He left a wife and 8 children to lament his loss. (Age not mentioned.) He was a faithful young brother, and of his funeral the writer says, never did I see more people at a burying. Funeral-text: 2 Cor. v. 1—3.

In a letter from MIDDLETOWN-VALLEY, Md. the death of two speakers is mentioned, namely of brother CHRISTIAN HARSHMAN, who died some time ago, aged over 75 years, and of brother DANIEL BROWN, who died lately (in July) aged 76 years 3 months and a few days.

THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER.

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For the Visiter.

(The present war in TURKEY is calculated to draw the attention to that people, who are the followers of the (false) prophet MOHAMED. Many of our readers will probably enquire, What kind of religion is it, that they profess? What are their views and principles? &c. For the purpose of giving them all the necessary information, we insert here the following, as a sample, how even a false religion can be embellished, and present a fair and apparently pious character.)

THE MUSSULMAN CATECHISM.

I.

Of the general principles of religion.

In the name of God most merciful!

Praised be God who has conducted us to the faith, and has established it as the seal of our entrance into the celestial Paradise, and as the veil between us and an eternal abode in the fires of hell.

May the peace and favor of God rest upon *Mohammed*, the most excellent among men, and the *Imam*, who directs his own in the right way; and not only upon him, but also upon his family and his glorious companions. And may that peace be perpetual to all men and constantly increasing forever and ever.

Know then that faith is the chief element of *Islam*, as the apostle Mohamed, (upon whom be peace!) has declared.

Now religion rests upon these five foundations; The confession of the true God, which consists in believing and confessing that, THERE IS NO GOD BUT GOD, AND MOHAMMED IS THE APOSTLE OF GOD; (La illahi ill' Allah, ve Mohammed resoul oullah.) The prescribed observance of prayers; The giving of alms; The fast of the month Ramazan; and, The pilgrimage to Mecca, which is required of every one who is in a state to undertake it.

To begin with the confession of the true God, (which is properly that which we call *Faith*,) it is needful to know that what we enact of a man who has arrived at the age of knowledge and understanding, is to believe in *God*, in his *Angels*, in his *Apostles*, in his *Revelations*, in the *last day*, and in his *Decree*, touching good and evil.

Now FAITH does not consist merely in being internally persuaded of the truth respecting all these points, but it is moreover necessary that the confession of the tongue make that persuasion to appear without by external signs.

II.

Of faith in God.

Faith in God consists in knowing truly with the heart and confessing openly with the mouth, that the Most High God exists; that He is true, permanent, and very essence; that He is Eternal in relation to the past, having never begun, and eternal also in relation to the future, since He is without the necessity of an end; that there appertaineth to him neither place, time, figure, nor any outward form whatever—no motion, change, transposition, separation, division, fraction, or fatigue; that He is without equal and without parallel; that He is perfectly Pure, One, Everlasting, and Living; that He is Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Sovereign;

that He hears, sees, speaks, acts, creates, sustains; that He produces intelligently; that He causes to live and causes to die; that He gives beginning to all, and makes all to return to their original state, whenever He pleases; that He judges, decrees, directs, commands, prohibits; that he conducts into the right way, and leads into error; and that to Him belong retribution, reward, punishment, favor and victory.

It is necessary farther to believe, that all these eternal attributes are embraced in His essential Being, and subsist in Him from everlasting to everlasting, without division or variation; yet so that it can neither be said that these attributes are Himself, nor that they are essentially different from Himself, since each of them is conjoined with another, as, for example, Life with knowledge, and knowledge with power.

Now these attributes, such as we have described them in action, are, in the abstract, life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, seeing, Eternity, (both anterior and posterior,) action, creation, sustentation, intelligent production, impartation of life, causation of death, the formation and restoration of things, wisdom, decree, direction to good, seduction to evil, retribution, reward, punishment, favor, and victory.

Such are the great and inestimable perfections of the Most High God, under which he is known and adored by the faithful. Whoever dares to deny them, or to call them in question, whether in whole or in part, truly he is an infidel.

O God, preserve Thou us from infidelity!

III.

Of the Angels.

As for that which concerns the necessary belief respecting angels, our faith will be complete, if we believe with the heart and confess with the mouth, that the Most High God has servants or ministers, to whom is given the name of angels, who are perfectly free from all sin, who assist continually before God, who punctually execute his commands and never disobey Him.

Respecting their nature we are required to believe that their bodies are subtile, pure, and formed of light; that they neither eat, drink, nor sleep; that they have no sexual properties, nor carnal appetites, and are without father or mother.

As they are endowed with different forms, so they have also distinct functions. Some stand erect, others maintain an inclined posture, others are seated, and, with the forehead bowed down, adore the Creator. Some chant His praises and sing hymns to His glory; others laud and magnify him after another manner; and others still intercede with him for the pardon of human sins. There are those among them who record our actions in their registers; there are others who protect us; others surround, and others still bear the throne of God; or they are employed in yet other duties, all alike agreeable to the Deity.

Now it is necessary to believe in these angels, although we know neither their names, nor their divers kinds. As it is one of the absolute conditions of faith to love them without exception, so is it infidelity to hate them all or any among them. If any one, moreover, dares to say, that though there are angels, they are distinguished, like ourselves, by sexes or, admitting, that they are without such distinction, is not careful to believe in them and love them, let him be regarded as an infidel!

O God, preserve Thou us from infidelity!

IV.

Of the sacred books.

Faith in the sacred books consists in being persuaded with the heart and confessing with the mouth, that there are illustrious books which God has sent from heaven to his prophets, and that they are uncreated and eternal.

In these books are contained the commandments of God and his prohibitions, his statutes, his promises and his threatenings, the declaration of that which is permitted, and of that which is forbidden, of that which constitutes obedience, and of that which constitutes rebellion, and, finally, they exhibit the proofs of a retribution, both by reward and punishment.

All these books are the very Word of the Most High God, a Word which is read in the languages, written in the volumes, and kept in the hearts of men.

But this word of God, since it exists in God himself, is quite distinct from the letters and words which represent it. Nevertheless these letters and these words are metaphysically called the *Word of God*, since they indicate the true Word; just as we are wont to call our word that which truly indicates our internal thoughts, or, as one of our own poets has well expressed it,

The inmost heart preserves the Word,
While language bears its voice abroad.

Yet it is only for man that language is necessary, for God knows well the heart, and all that is in it.

These sacred books are one hundred and four in number. Of these, Almighty God sent ten to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Idris, (Enoch,) ten to Abraham, one to Moses, viz. the law, or that which we call the Pentateuch; one to Jesus, which is the Gospel; one to David, which is the book of Psalms; and one to Mohammed, which is the Koran.

Whoever disavows these books, or questions the divine character of all or any part thereof, though it be no more than a single chapter, or a single verse, or even a solitary word, surely such a one is an infidel.

O God, preserve Thou us from infidelity!

V.

Of the Apostles of God.

Faith, as it regards the apostles of God, requires that we believe with the heart and confess with the tongue, that the Most High God has had Prophets, or extraordinary men, whom He has sent to other men. These prophets are true in all which they declare unto us, and we must render them an entire belief, whether they ordain certain things, or prohibit them, or announce to us the orders of heaven, or make the celestial constitutions and canons, or reveal to us hidden things, such as the nature, attributes, and works of God, the impartation and restoration of life, the trial of the Sepulchre, the Balance, the sharp Bridge, the Fountain, the Intercession, Paradise and its delights, and Hell with its torments.

It is needful, too, to know that these prophets are exempt from all error and grievous sins, and are zealous for one and the same religion, which is Islam, although differing among themselves so far as regards the mode of their institutions. They are the elect from among all creatures, inasmuch as they have been honored with interviews with God himself, and with the descent of angels unto them, while their ministry has been authorized by manifest miracles, entirely above the regular order of nature. Some among them have raised the dead and have held conversation with

beasts, trees and other inanimate things which, in turn, have paid them homage. These are prerogatives to which other men can never attain.

Furthermore, it should be known that God has established among them a certain subordination, by which one is exalted above another. Thus those among them who have exercised the office of Apostles, are superior to those who have not exercised it, while those who have introduced new dispensations are, in rank, above those to whom this privilege has not been accorded.

The first of these prophets was Adam, but the last and most excellent of all was Mohammed, to whom may God be favorable, and vouchsafe His blessing, as also to all those who preceded him.

Among the first disciples of the Prophet, the most excellent of all, and he who approaches most nearly to the rank of a prophet is Abubekr, after him Omar, next Othman, and lastly, Ali. After these four, in order of dignity, follow the six honorable companions of Mohammed—to wit, Telha, Alzabeir, Saad, Zaid, Abdurrahman, and Abou Obeida: next to them, the rest of his companions; and after these, the fortunate generation of men to whom Mohammed was sent. May God bless the Prophet, and divine favor rest upon them all. Last of all come those who do good works, and whom we honor with the name of *saints*.

The number of prophets, according to one tradition, is two hundred and eighty-four thousand, but according to another, only half as many. Among these, one hundred and thirteen have exercised the functions of Apostles, and six have brought to man new revelations; namely, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. May God be propitious to one and all, and crown them with His favor.

Faith does not absolutely require an exact knowledge of the number of these extra ordinary men, but it is essential to salvation to love them. He who loves them not, or who hates any one of them, must be ranked with infidels. In like manner, whoever denies or questions the truth of any one of them, or rejects even one of their declarations, is already an infidel.

O God, preserve Thou us from infidelity!

VI.

Of the last Day.

Faith in the last day consists in believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth that there shall indeed, be a last day, even that of the resurrection, when Almighty God shall destroy and annihilate this world, and shall cause to perish all men and creatures which are found in it, excepting only certain things proper to be preserved. Such are, for instance, the throne of glory and the foundation on which it rests, and the ministering Spirit, and the Table of Decrees, and the pen with which they are written, and Paradise and Hell with all that they contain.

After this God shall restore all creatures which he had annihilated, he shall awaken them with the sound of the angelic trumpet; and having re-imparted to them vitality and intelligence, shall gather them into one place, where he shall examine them and demand an account of their past lives. To each one of them shall be given a book containing the record of his good or bad actions, according to his character. They who receive the first are the good, who will hold their books in the right hand; the others are the wicked, who will hold their books in their left hands and behind their backs. Thereupon the Most High God will judge them in righteousness and equity, weighing in the Bal-

ance all their works, both good and bad, and rendering to every soul according to what he has done, whether it be good or evil.

Through His goodness and mercy some shall enter paradise, whilst others shall descend into hell. But no one of the faithful shall abide eternally in the tormenting fires of hell. They shall all enter into paradise after having undergone punishments proportioned to their transgressions. The faithful ones introduced into heaven shall dwell there forever, while the infidels, precipitated into hell, shall never go out therefrom.

In order that faith in the resurrection may be salutary and complete, it is absolutely necessary, that it be contemplated with alarm. Let him, then, who shall look upon it with indifference or a feeling of security; him, too, who shall deny or doubt thereon, or who is impious enough to say, either with the mouth or in the heart, "I fear neither the resurrection nor hell, and I care not for paradise," let such a one be esteemed an infidel.

O God, save us from infidelity!

(Concluded in our next.)

* * *

THE PARABLE IN JOHN X.

— — As I am writing and have time and paper, I will offer a few thoughts upon the parable contained in the 10th chapter of our Lord's Gospel recorded by St. John, subject however to the scrutiny just recommended, and if thought worthy it may be published.

I have heard a good deal of surmising and a great many different opinions expressed upon this subject, and I frankly acknowledge, that it is well calculated to puzzle the mind of the young theological student, and it was a considerable time before I could come to a conclusion satisfactory to my mind. Nor did I accomplish it, until I applied the rule, which I have of late universally adopted, of making the Scriptures in all cases their own expositor, and in this way it becomes perfectly natural & easy. In doing this it is sometimes necessary to take several verses and sometimes several chapters and sometimes a number of detached passages together.

With this view before us, we will proceed to the examination of the parable under consideration. First, we will inquire, What is the intention of the parable?—Upon a careful comparison with the foregoing chapter, I think, we will find it was intended as a reproof to the presumptuous scribes and pharisees, who insolently rejected the miracle of the Saviour performed upon the blind man, saying that he was a sinner, and that they trusted in Moses, &c. And now the Saviour goes on to declare unto them in a figure, that he is to be preferred before any other, because He as the eternal Son of the Father, (the Master of his own house,) having received all power in heaven and in earth from the Father, and having received his commission from Him who had the authority to give, he had entered into his mission properly by the door, and therefore was the true Shepherd of the sheep; and being the onlybegotten of the Father, he was the rightful heir to the sheep; and he having not received the Spirit by measure, which I understand to be meant by the porter, who openeth to him the will of his Father, as it were as a door of utterance, so that the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

And as they did not understand the parable, he saw proper to speak more plainly to them, by declaring in plain language, that he was that door of which

he had spoken, and all that came before him in the character of that door, i. e. as the *Messiah*, were thieves and robbers. By this I understand to be meant primarily those false prophets and false Christs &c. spoken of by the apostles, and he may have had reference also to Moses and others viewed in the light in which these scribes and pharisees looked upon them, but not in their real character, for in their real character they were subject to Him and obedient to the dictates of the same Spirit, testifying that he was their superior, as John the baptist says, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

And our Saviour also testifies, that they did not believe in Moses in the proper light, saying John v. 46. "There is one that accuses you, even Moses in whom you trust. For had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me, but if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe my words?" They believed in Moses it is true, because they, as we have seen, professed to be Moses' disciples; but they believed on him as being worthy of more honor than the Saviour, and in this they sinned. And in this comparison if looked upon in this light, he was no better than others of false pretensions.

But if viewed in his proper character, he is a beautiful type of our Saviour, as he declared to Israel, "A prophet shall the Lord thy God raise up from among thy brethren like unto me; him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you, &c." And so all faithful and humble worshippers having an inherent principle which enables them with the assistance of the word of God, to distinguish between truth and error, and to form a just conception of the character and pretensions of all who profess to be teachers &c. So they did not hear nor follow the voice of those impostors, who came professing to be the Saviour, nor even Moses and the prophets any farther than their authority required; for although some were Moses' disciples, and some the disciples of John, when our Saviour commenced preaching his own Gospel, they became his disciples. And as the Saviour was sent by his Father and received his authority from Him, so also he sent and commissioned his apostles, by whom he established his church on earth, and through that church their successors in the ministry. So all that have entered in this way through him (the door) into the ministry with proper motives, will contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

And the meek and lowly will still follow them, as they follow Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and shun those who are hirelings and strangers, because they know not their voice. Their teaching being different from that of their Saviour, his apostles, and ministers. For they will know, that if they would follow them, that they would be robbed of their salvation, following the traditions of men, and making the commandments of God of none effect. For as there were in those days false prophets and false Christs, so shall there be false teachers in these times.

It becomes us then to be strictly upon our guard, and to try the spirits whether they be of God; for the Saviour has forewarned us, that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. And as it is necessary, that those who come into the ministry should come in through Christ the door, that is, according to his arrangement, the church being his legal representative upon earth; For, says Paul, Ye are the body of Christ, and

members in particular in the transaction of the business of his house. So it is necessary that all who come into the body should come in by the door, CHRIST, i. e. by faith and obedience toward him, in which we have the promise of the life that now is and that which is to come.

Under his care we shall be always bountifully provided for. As the sheep under the care of a faithful shepherd are provided with nourishment by day, and a place of safety and rest by night; so the faithful follower of Jesus shall be comforted in all his out-goings and incomings through this life, his spiritual wants bountifully supplied, and in the world of spirits a mansion of safety and eternal rest. "For there remaineth a rest for the people of God."

Let us, the sheep by Jesus named,
Our shepherd's mercy bless!
Let us, whom Jesus has redeemed,
Our shepherd's mercy bless!
Not unto us, to Thee alone,
Be praise and glory given,
Here shall our praises be begun,
But carried on in heaven.

LAZARUS.

* * *

FOR THE GOSPEL-VISITER.

HOW ARE WE TO GET INTO CHRIST?

The apostle Paul in his letter to the church of Rome chap. viii. 1. says, "Here is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Now if we are not in Christ, we must be in a condemned state, and must be lost to all intents and purposes, if we remain in that state. But there is a possibility of coming into Christ, and coming into Christ presupposes, that we were out of Christ, and if there is an in, there must be a way to come in.

Now for the testimony and how we are to come into Christ? Rom vi. 3 "Know ye not, that so many of us, as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" That is, we profess by baptism, that we are dead to sin, and alive to God; therefore says the apostle, "We are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," that is, the old man should be buried with his deeds and the new man raised to life again. Gal. iii. 27. "For as many of you, as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

Now it is evident from the above passages of scripture, that it is in baptism, that we come into Christ. Then all that are unbaptized, are not in Christ, and therefore must be in condemnation so long as they remain in that state. But if we are in Christ, we are new creatures. 2 Cor. v. 17. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." The old man is put off with his deeds, and the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. Then are they now no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in (not out of) whom all the building is fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. Eph. ii. 19—22.

Mark the expression, "in the Lord." Now if we are out of the Lord, we can never be new creatures, while we remain in that state, and are the old man and are carnal, and to be carnally-minded, is death; but to be spiritually-minded, is

life and peace. Now we see that there is a fitness about the matter and not one coming in this way, and another that way, one by sprinkling, another by pouring, and another by baptism. But if, after we come into Christ, we walk after the flesh, and not after the spirit, then we are condemned.

After we come into Christ, we are then fit subjects to go on to perfection. Then if we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; 2 Pet. i. 5—8. we then have the promise of an inheritance among the saints in light, in that holy city, the new Jerusalem, the city of our God, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Then let us one and all try to so live in this world, so as to get home to heaven, where the wicked will cease from troubling, and the weary soul will be at eternal rest. Now, my beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, let us take the word of the Lord for the man of our counsel, for

Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries,
Oh happiest they of human race,
To whom our God has given grace,
To hear, to read, to fear, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way,
But better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

B. S.

Communicated for the Visiter.

COMFORT FOR THE POOR.

"For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul." Ps. cix. 31.

When viewing the blessed word of Him who "spake as never man spake," the poor has comforts more lasting than silver or gold; for where has the rich and opulent such comforting promises as the poor? Mark the words of the Psalmist, "For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor!" Who is it that shall stand at the right hand of the poor? It is God of heaven and earth, He whose bowels move with compassion towards his meek and lowly followers; he will administer to their necessities; cheering thoughts for those of us, who are despised on account of our penurity. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith?"

Yes, my beloved brethren and sisters, though you may be poor in this world, be not discouraged; though you may have the finger of scorn pointed at you, rejoice that your names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Remember that the mercy of the Lord is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." And again, "they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction & perdition."

Would it not be much better to partake of the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, and be contented with a Lazarus of old, than to run both soul and body into destruction, for the purpose of keeping pace with the worldly and high-minded? "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low degree." Is this observed as it should be? Is it not a lamentable fact, that we

often see among professed christians, yea and among our own dear brethren, that the poor are treated with disrespect. How sad it makes my heart feel, when I see a brother of wealth shun those of poverty; and no reason can be assigned only they do not make as gay an appearance in every respect; this I think is very wrong.

If God has prospered you above your fellow-man, you ought to render thanks for his abundant mercies, and show your good fruits by administering to the necessities of those, who are not so favorably circumstanced as you are, and more especially to the *widows* and *orphans*, and then your riches will be turnd into a blessing; You then are the very characters that can make a community comfortable and happy. Have you ever considered, what a folly it would be for you, to heap up treasures in this world, and neglect the one thing needful? "What would it profit a man if he would gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

For God shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that would condemn his soul. If God shall stand at the right hand of the poor, what can harm him? The answer is plain that *nothing* can harm or molest him; he is safe from the enemies of the cross of Christ; that is, if he seeks an interest in the blood of Jesus Christ. We all know that a poor man can do as wickedly as a rich man, but if he tries to do what is right, he has great promises in the word of God; he has a right to the tree of life. But he must be willing to submit to each and every command that is found in the New Testament without cavilling or making inquiry, what it will profit him?

We often see men, who want to get rich in this world before they seek an interest in the kingdom of God, forgetting that the Saviour says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Yes, if we earnestly seek an interest in Christ, and have faith in his word, we are secure. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord; press forward to the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus; contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." Travel that narrow path that leads to glory and ere long you will land your souls on the sunny banks of free deliverance, there to sing praises to God and the Lamb through the ceaseless ages of eternity.— God grant it.

E. —

For the Visiter.

A DIALOGUE.

A. Friend B. I wish to have a short discourse with you on the subject of religion, as you belong to that peculiar class of Christians termed (although I believe sarcastically,) dunkards, who hold the idea I am told, that there is no such thing as experimental religion, and that we cannot know, whether we have passed from death unto life or not, but teach that the observance of the external ordinances is all that is necessary for the salvation of the soul.

B. As to the name that the world has given us it matters but little; we need not care, though we are called fiends or demons by the world, if we have the love of Jesus shed abroad in our hearts, and are recognized by him as his faithful followers, all is well. Christ, our great pattern, when he was reviled, reviled not again, and he has taught us in his word that if we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, we should rejoice

and be exceeding glad; for great is our reward in heaven. When the apostles were beaten, they rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer, and as to us holding the idea, that there is no reality in experimental religion, and that we cannot know, when we are born again, I deny the assertion. We hold as strictly as any other sect the necessity of a change of heart before we can consistently be termed humble cross-bearing disciples of Christ, but teach that we should be very careful, lest we build on a sandy foundation; for there is great danger of us receiving the approval of our own sinful hearts for the approving smiles of God and his spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are born of God. Let us beware then, and not rely on the feelings of our hearts alone, as testimony that we have passed from death unto life; for our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and Satan, that vile deceiver, is ever on the alert to draw our precious immortal souls into ruin, and we are too easily led captive by him at his will. As to us believing, that the mere observance of the external ordinances, that we hold as doctrinal points and commands of our Saviour, is all that is necessary for the salvation of the soul, I also deny. Our church teaches (in unison with the New Testament scriptures,) that we must repent, believe, and be baptized for the remission of our sins, and walk in newness of life, not return to the weak and beggarly elements of the world, but press forward unto perfection as far as is attainable in this life. For the life of a christian must be progressive, there is no sitting still on the stool of do-nothing; for we must either go forward or retrograde.— —

A. Well I am told that you believe all the commandments to be essential to the salvation of the soul, such as baptism and feet-washing, (if the latter can be considered a command to be observed in the present day,) and all other commands of minor importance.— —

B. Yes, we do hold that they are essential to salvation, simply because they have been enjoined upon us by the most high God, and I consider it beneath the dignity of that holy and just Being, to give a command, and leave it optional with us fallible and sin-loving mortals to decide, whether we will obey those commands or not, and yet be justifiable in his sight. It is utterly absurd, and should be banished from the mind. That baptism is an essential command appears very plain to me from the reading of God's word, and it seems strange, very strange indeed, that an intelligent person should doubt it for one moment. Not that mere water itself will wash any soul from guilt, but to comply with it is an act of obedience, and it is through obedience to the requirements of God in connection with faith that we are justified. In the first epistle of Peter we find these words, (the apostle was speaking of Noah and his family being saved by water,) "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God." And again, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Now may not the latter part of this sentence be considered an elliptical phrase, and were the ellipsis supplied would read thus, he that believeth not, and is not baptized, shall be damned. And And again, on the day of Pentecost when three thousand were convicted of sin and cried out, Men and brethren what shall we do? Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of

you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost," and had we time I could cite you to many passages similar to those named.

A. Then I may understand you to believe, that no one is saved unless he is baptized.

B. No one that has it in his power to comply with that command. I doubt not, there are many saved without baptism, but they have not had the ability to perform that work, such as invalids &c., yet have a strong desire so to do, the will therefore is taken for the deed. But those who are able, must not stop at baptism. Our Saviour says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, (to observe) *every* command not one or two but ALL. For after we have done all that we have been commanded to do, we are unprofitable servants, having done nothing more than was our duty to do; and John tells us, that "hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments, and he that saith I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him." And Christ says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you." If the righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" And in regard to feetwashing I have this to say, that I think it very plain from the reading of the 13th chapter of John, that it is a command to be observed in the present day. Christ says, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

A. But it was a custom at that time to wear sandals instead of shoes, and the soil was sandy; hence the necessity of washing their feet, to take the dust off before retiring to rest.

B. Why then did Peter not know what it was for, when Jesus was about to wash his feet, but he refused saying, Thou shalt never wash my feet, Jesus says, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Peter then wanted him to do more than was necessary.

A. But this was just to teach them humility.

B. Had the disciples in that primitive time more need of something to teach them humility than we in this corrupted age of the world? Certainly not, and they are to teach us to observe all things, that they were commanded to do.

A. But this is a duty enjoined upon us only when we lodge strangers.

B. Paul in writing to Timothy, in describing the character of widows that were to be supported by the church, says, "If she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saint's feet &c." Now if it were the feet of strangers, that are to be washed, would it not read thus: If she have lodged strangers, and washed their feet,—but he says, the *saint's* feet, evidently implying, that it is a church ordinance. Let me, my friends, induce you to prove your heart to the bottom, and let your conscience bear witness, whether it is not a man-fearing spirit that prevents you, to be made willing to comply with the humble requirements of the Gospel? Dread not the scoffs and sneers of a gainsaying world, but come out on the Lord's side, equiped as a soldier, to fight your way through this wilderness of sin, and be strong in the Lord, for we have many enemies to contend with, and ever bear in mind, that if you bear no cross, you need expect no crown. Farewell.

AN OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTOR.

CONCERNING OUR LAST YEARLY-MEETING.

Dear brother.

— — — In settling upour yearly-meeting matters we find a balance in the treasury of cash amounting to $34,79, and inasmuch as it was agreed by the different congregations to distribute the balance equally in proportion to the amounts paid in, we have therefore made a proportional dividend, and thought, it would be best or most satisfactory to the congregations to know how the accounts stand, so that if there is any lacking, they may know how much to make up, and if any over, they can know, how much they are to get; and as the amounts are small, and the congregations in different parts of the state, we were advised by old brethren, to have a statement published in the Visiter.—

We the committee appointed to close up the settlement would therefore through this means inform the congregations, that the following congregations are entitled to the amounts annexed, and that the money is ready any time they wish to call for it.

GEORGE WITWER.
LEVI MOHLER.
MOSES WEAVER.

Congregations.	
Chippaway - -	$3,52
Ashland - -	3,45
Mohegan - -	2,65
Brubakers Run -	2,26
Delaware - -	1,14
Nimishillen - -	2,74
Sugar Creek - -	2,77
Rome - -	3,33
Sandy - -	3,33
Tuscarawas - -	1,34
Wyandott - -	,41
Owl Creek - -	2,57
Crawford - -	1,63
Seneca - -	1,34
Black Swamp - -	,54
Canton - -	1,77
Balance to be distributed	$34,79

Address George Wittwer, Friends, Ashland co. O.

(We would here remark, that though we have not forgotten our task laid upon us at the last yearly meeting, and have reflected much on the subject ever since, we have not been able yet to write any thing. A dear brother wrote us some time ago, "As it regards what was suggested at the close of the (last) yearly meeting in relation to rendering our annual-meeting less burthensome, I have been led to think the subject should be kept in view, and perhaps the Visiter would afford a proper medium to ask and answer questions in relation to the better or more convenient way of holding our annual meetings, so as to render them less burthensome, and still answer the ends for which they are held.—Perhaps we can send you something on the subject &c." Now before we enter upon our task, we would wish this and other experienced brethren would send us their views and suggestions, not to publish them one by one, which would occupy too much space in the Visiter, and not be interesting to the general reader,—but to enable us, to compress in one address to all the churches, and in fact to all the members of our brotherhood, what is necessary at this time on the subject. We hope, they will do so soon, as we will still require time, to do our humble part of the task.)

For the Visiter.

A DIALOGUE

Between a young man and a Christian.

(Concluded.)

Youth. It may be well for those that are so very wicked. But for my part I am no great sinner; I never stole, or got drunk, nor took the name of the Lord in vain; but have always lived a moral life;—so there is no use of my being in any great hurry, for I have but few sins to answer for.

Christian. The word of God declares, that unless a man be born of the spirit and of the water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now we are all sinners by nature and practice, therefore need the cleansing blood of Christ to make us clean; therefore we must be baptized for the remission of our sins, and then we have the promise of the Holy Spirit which is being born of the Spirit and of water. There is none of us, let us live ever so moral outside of the church of Christ, but what need his shed blood applied to our unclean hearts; for we daily commit sin, we possess unthankful hearts, and if we will not attach ourselves to his body, it shows ungrateful hearts. For there are many of God's commands, we can not obey, unless we are among God's people. And when we come to see our condition, when we are about to step from the known to the unknown world, we will very much regret when too late, our disobedience to God's law. Now my friend, look back over your past life and compare it with the revealed will of God, and see if you have not been guilty of many sins that would render you accountable and condemn you in the great day of the Lord. Then repent, and prepare; for death is nigh, and soon will call you hence.

Our days alas! our mortal days
Are short and wretched too;
Evil and few, the patriarch says,
And well the patriarch knew.

'Tis but at best a narrow bound,
That heaven allows to men;
And pains and sins run through the round
Of three score years and ten.

Youth. But there are very many of the present day, who profess to have found Christ, and to have learnt of him, that by their conduct I am inclined to believe, they would do things, that I would think far beneath me. Now if such men are saved in the church, I think that I can be saved out of the church, and if they are not saved, then they are hypocrites, and with such I would not want to associate; for I could not in good faith call them brethren, who were pretenders.

Christian. My dear friend, there are many, I admit that, that are professors but not possessors, and lamentable is their case indeed; and such will (if they do not repent) be cast where there is weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. For even if they do obey the form of some of the commands of God, and not have a new heart given them, they are none of God's and no better will be their lot in the day of retribution.

Yet such as these will ever be found among the children of God; but when the harvest comes, God will gather the tares from among the wheat, though it may not be safe for us to try to pull up the tares at the present, for fear we destroy some of the wheat also. Therefore we must wait in patience; but even if there are wicked persons in the church, it is not right for you to keep yourself aloof on their account. For if you are brought in judgment by

God, this will be no excuse for you, because others neglected their known duty, you done so too; for if you know what the duty of others is, you know what your duty is too.

Then arise and serve the Lord, and lay a living example for all to pattern after, and in love try to bring those false members to a true sense of their duty, and you will then be rewarded with a never-fading crown and be permitted to join in the blessed song of all the redeemed of the Lord.

If worldlings ask the reason why
We do so often meet,
In love to them we do reply
To wait at Jesus feet.

We tell them 'tis our greatest joy
To meet and sing and pray,
The noblest rational employ
Of each succeeding day.

To man in nature this is strange
For want of better light,
There must be an entire change
To worship God aright.

Ah did you know the joys we feel
In our despised way,
You also would a moment steal
And join to sing and pray.

YOUTH. Indeed, sir, I have no doubt but you see a great deal of pleasure in serving God. But if I was to become religious, and devote my whole time to the service of the Lord, I would have to give up all my gay company & all those pleasant parties and balls, in which I have taken such delight. And my gay young companions would shun me, and laugh at me, which would be hard for me to bear; therefore I think I at least better defer till I am settled in life, and then I will try to be religious.

CHRISTIAN. This very excuse has been the ruin of many, very many of our young men, and it seems to be one, that the devil can present more successfully than all others to the young, and it is a very dangerous one. But what kind of a companion would that be, that would scoff at you for being good, and trying to live a useful life? None would do so, but those that are not fit to be associated with; they are given over to reprobacy, and to give up such company as that, would tend much to make you happy. And religion will not curtail your happiness in the least, but it will make you happy indeed.

It is true, you will lose all love for sinful pleasures; but you will be far happier, when you feel your sins are pardoned; for I can testify, that I have tried all the so-called pleasures of this world, and I find with one of old they are vanity. They leave an aching void in the heart; they are not true and substantial, but false as the smooth deceitful sea and empty as the whistling wind.

But not so with this pure enjoyment obtained by obeying the revealed will of God. It brings joy, peace and comfort to the heart, and not for one day alone, but day by day it grows brighter and stronger, and will so continue, till it bursts forth in a flame on the sunny banks of happy deliverance. Then who is it, that will not be persuaded to give up all the transient and sinful pleasures of youth, and try to obtain that blessed heart-felt joy, that will make us happy here, and happy in unbounded eternity? Yes, for the joys of heaven be now persuaded to forsake all those youthful sins, and the pleasures of heaven will be an ample recompense to you for so doing; for there tears and sorrow can not come.

Oh where shall rest be found,
Rest for the weary soul?
'Twere vain the ocean depths to sound,
Or pierce the airy pole.

The world can never give
The bliss, for which we sigh,
'Tis not the whole of life to live,
Nor all of death to die.

Beyond this vale of tears
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years,
And all that life is love.

YOUTH. I have, sir, one more reason for saying that I cannot yet become as you desire me to be a man of obedience, and I am well aware, sir, that you know that in the eyes of the most of mankind at the present day, pure and undefiled religion is not at all popular, and I for my part want to be at least for awhile counted a great man; for we see great monuments erected to men for their great bravery and daring acts, and their name is held up in the written history of the present day for an example for us, then why not follow their example? But still your religion forbids a man to go to war which is one of the means to become popular, and it forbids us to take an active part in the politics of the country, hence it forbids us to be statesmen; but calls on us to be forbearing, humble and meek, and lowly of heart, which does not well accord with our natural disposition, therefore is too hard a cross for me to bear: for I desire that the trump of fame may sound my name faithfully to posterity. Yes, let me climb to the top of the hill of worldly honor and then may be, God will still have mercy on me, for I allow to be a moral man and try to do to others as I wish others to do to me; therefore excuse me, for this is the last and strongest objection that I have to present, and I will listen to your objection with pleasure.

CHRISTIAN. How deceptive are the ways of sin! and it assumes every form imaginable to captivate man and bring him to death. And my dear friend, I am well aware that pure and undefiled religion is not popular in the world of mankind, from the fact, that their deeds are evil, and they fear the light lest they be reproved; thus the world for this very reason despise the revealed will of God, while there is another class, that profess to love the laws of God as long as they can make them effect some sensitive motive, such as self-aggrandisement, worldly honors, worldly possessions. But still bitter is the condemnation of all such, for they are to be cast into that lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, where there will be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth! Now this is the end of all such that will not have the Lord to rule over them, but fear the reproach of man more than of God, and we are told by our blessed Lord and Master, that if we follow Him that we must expect persecution and even to suffer bondage and imprisonment for his sake. But when he comes to make his jewels up we have the promise of being made kings and priests unto God, a glory, as far above the glory of the earth as the sun is above our revolving globe; and honor brighter than the mid-day splendor of yon bright luminary of light, and a fame more to be desired than gold or silver or precious stones; because this glory, and honor, and fame, will last through endless eternity, and grow brighter and brighter through all the ages of eternity.

Now my dear fellow traveler to the bar of God, is not this more to be desired than the glory that is purchased by the lamentations of a poor widow, who mourns an earthly protector who fell by your hand on the field of carnage, where blood flowed like a torrent? Yes, can this poor widow and her orphan

children pray for you as their kind and benevolent benefactor, when you have slain their dearest friend? And do you think you would be doing a moral act to slay your brother man, when the command is, thou shalt not kill? And are you doing to others, as you wish others to do unto you, are you willing some person may come and take your life? And what must be your reflections and thoughts, when you have been engaged like the dumb brute striving to obtain the mastery, and have in cold blood murdered your brother man; will this bring peace and comfort to you, will this cause you to lie down at ease and not care whether you wake up in the known or unknown world? Ah no! your mind will be racked with pain, the form of your murdered brother will rise before your sight awake or asleep, and haunt your guilty mind; while the thought of your evil deed will cause you to fear when no danger is nigh, and to flee when none pursueth. Truly the blood of the slain calleth unto the Lord for vengeance; for there is no happiness, but in pure and undefiled religion, that will make the widow and orphan to call upon God to bless, and with that you can lie down in peace contented and rest your all upon Him, who is able to save to the uttermost.

Then forsake all thoughts of earthly glory, and fly to Jesus that stands with open arms to receive the prodigal that has strayed from his father's house but now has returned, and there be joy and sounds of melody among the hosts of heaven, because one sinner has become willing to renounce all the vanities of this world and seeking the joys of heaven, & you will never repent your choice. As you desire to ascend the chair of state, let me tell you, the Saviour says, My kingdom is not of this world; and then if you seek to rule in this world only, you have no assurance of being made a partaker of the Saviour's kingdom. Then be persuaded to lay aside all carnal weapons, and desire and enlist under the banner of Prince Emanuel, and fight the good fight of faith, and come off more than victor through the name of Jesus, and then you will reap a happy reward when the soul-cheering voice of high heaven will say, Come up hither ye blessed of the Lord and rest from all your labor; this will be glory, honor and fame, that the world knows not, much less give. Now may the Lord bless you and bring you to a true knowledge of your dependance on him.

Young people all in blooming days,
Hear what your Lord and Saviour says,
Now is the time to seek my face,
And to receive my Gospel-grace.

In gospel banner now he stands
With peace and pardon in his hands,
Offering to sinners in their prime,
Come, now is the accepted time.

Forsake this world and all its fame,
Take up the cross, despise the shame,
And now pursue the living way,
That leads to everlasting day.

CEPHAS.

For the Visiter.

SEASONABLE REFLECTIONS.

There are thoughts that come across the mind, even in the brightest hours, that make us feel gloomy, throwing dark shadows over the fairest scenes.

In the season of mirth and revelry they come like unwelcome guests, whose presence is a check upon the spirits, and annoyer of the pleasures. At the feast, in the social circle, in the soul's converse with its own mysterious self, they

come like the death-knell on the prisoner's ear. In the brightness of noonday, at the sunset hour, but above all, in the silence of midnight, thoughts of death, of the grave, will discompose the calmness of the fairest brow, and chill the blood as it passes through the veins. And it will be so; when we remember the eye now radiant with affection must be closed in death, the voice so full of joy and gladness must be forever hushed, —this may well cause us to pause in our course of action and of gayety, and inquire what we are. What is man? Whence came he? Whither does he go? Is he a mortal or an immortal being? Is he to spring up like the grass, bloom like a flower; drop into the earth and die forever? Is there no object of future hope? No God, no heaven, no exalted state of happiness after life is over?

"Shall ever spring visit the mouldering urn,
Shall day ever dawn on the night of the grave?"

Are all the good and great that have lived before we were born, wasted and gone forever?

The time has now come we see the sear and yellow leaves, and in their silent language they remind us, that the seal of mortality is set on earth's fairest blossoms, and that death has stamped his signet on the brightest buds of hope. And their lot is ours! Thou earth, thou art but a feeble reed to lean on, few the ties that bind us to thee; weak the shackles that thou framest, and we would spurn them from us. But a star hath arisen to gild the darkness of the grave, and death is but the threshold of immortal day! Like the beams that tinge the eastern sky, a forerunner of the dawn, so life is but the prelude to the existence of enjoyment, which dawns on the night of the grave. Then welcome death, though thou mayest sever the closest ties, and snap asunder affections golden links; though thou mayest blast all that is beautiful, gladly we bow to thy sovereign power. "Life and immortality is brought to light through the glorious Gospel of the Son of God."

J. K.

LETTER FROM PALESTINE.

ARTOS near BETHLEHEM
Sept. 16, 1852.

To my dear mother, father, brother and sisters.

After so many long months my heart was made very glad last night by the receipt of my dear sister Leah's kind letter. O how thankful I feel to the Lord to hear all the particulars of your health and safety, and I now would again say in answer, that very great has been the goodness of the Lord to me since I wrote. My health is very good, better than it has been in 3 or 4 years, and sister M. says, I look several years younger, my flesh being very full and hard. Though we live plain, I have had every thing necessary for my good, and have an excellent appetite. I much enjoy the fine grapes and figs, peaches, pears &c. which we have in abundance; though we are all advised not to eat too much fruit the first year. I have not felt any rheumatism as formerly.

The dear christian friends, with whom I came, are faithful and kind to me, and the Lord also gives me favor more and more with br. and sister Meshullam and their family and christian acquaintance. I used to talk like other Christians about self-denial, and wishing to serve and work for the Lord, and though I was doing something that way, yet here I find a greater reality of sur-

vice to Christ, and a wider opportunity than I ever thought of in America. We all live in one family, nearly thirty in number; Mr. M's. family, and ours, and the laboring Jews and Arabs, and we have many poor Jews coming and going.

Many are sufferers indeed, and think it a great comfort to walk 8 miles from the city through (the heat of) the sun, to spend the night with us, get their supper and breakfast, some fruit and vegetables, and each a few piastres. It almost breaks our hearts when respectable middle-aged men of families come out in numbers, and beg with tears to live with us, and work the best they can, (which is poor indeed for want of strength and knowing how.) Many talk german, and some told me, that when they first heard of our coming from such a far country out of love to them, and that we kept the Sabbath, it gave them a great desire to come out and live with us, and that they feel much love for us.

They say, the time is come, if they could leave off their evil ways, and honestly cultivate their own land, they believe, their Messiah would soon come. One who is staying here for a few weeks, became fully convinced of Jesus being the true Messiah, and is now very happy. The Catholic, Greek, Armenian and Church of England missionaries are very numerous in Jerusalem, and are worldly and proud. Two from the English mission are now here in Artos for a few weeks for their health. They said, (although they are all jealous of us,) that if we did nothing else but show in our lives a different and more humble religion to the poor from these others, it would be a great thing. This is what we are seeking with all our hearts to do.

Dr. Barclay, a minister of the Disciples sent 2 years ago as a missionary to Jerusalem, is a very kind brother, and he has a very pleasant wife, one daughter and two sons; the oldest is 21. They are very kind to us, and he comes out occasionally on 7th days to meet with us, though he would like to turn us from it, and unite with him, as that is our greatest difference. They are rich, and well-supported also by their brethren in America. He says, it costs him one thousand dollars a year to live in Jerusalem. They have a good house, and every thing comfortable; he has baptized quite a number who meet in his house.

This summer he has taken a little stonehouse on Mount Olivet, facing the city, for health. After many invitations Emma and I with Moses, a very faithful Jew that lives with us, started on the 21th of August on our donkeys before sunrise to visit them on Mount Olivet. As we went along we passed camels loaded with charcoal and brushwood going to Jerusalem, and shepherds with their flocks of goats and sheep going to the mountains. We went into Jaffa-gate, and rode through the city, and went out St. Stephen's gate and across the brook Kidron, and by the garden of Gethsemane and up a steep path to the house.

They welcomed us very kindly; we looked through their spy-glass, and overlooked all Jerusalem, and the great mosque where the temple once stood. O what solemn thoughts were impressed upon me, as I looked down in Gethsemane, where our blessed Lord suffered for us. Why should we not also suffer for his sake?—After dinner we went to the spot where it is supposed he ascended (to heaven.)

Dear mother wants to know if I am homesick, and if I think of coming

home. Dear mother, this I know, that I did not come here of my own will, or to gratify any selfish purpose;' neither did man bring me here, but the kind and direct providence of the Lord. He has thus far provided for all my need without any certain provision from man, (we have to live by faith.) He has given me a home in this land, and plenty to do. I know not the will of the Lord for the future. If spared he may send me again to you, to tell you many things which I here see and hear, and which I cannot write. His will only be done in me. This is the purpose and mind of the rest of my friends.

We have constant evidence, that God is favoring this land, and that he has begun to turn to Israel. We hear from Jerusalem, that the Grand Saltan has sent engineers to Jaffa to make a good harbor, as it is so bad, that no large vessel can anchor there, when there are high winds. This has been a great hindrance to the restoration of the land. We also hear, that the French intend soon to make a road from Jaffa to Jerusalem suitable for stages to run. Such a thing as a wagon is not seen in this country.

Many Jews are gathering quietly to Jerusalem, and there are now between 15 and 16 thousand. Mr. Meshullam was the first that built outside of the city. Before no one dared to live in the open country, and no one built or repaired houses, except the Turks very rarely in walled towns.—No one cultivated the land except here and there the Arabs sowed a little wheat and barley in the richest vallies. But now every where outside the walls they are building houses and terraces, and planting vineyards, and trees, and grain.

Many pious people from nearly all nations are coming to visit the land. Several rich Jews have bought land, and begin to cultivate it. There is a general belief among all classes that a great change is near, and even the Arabs have said under the oppression of the Turks, "God send us the reign of the Nazarene!" They frequently exclaim when they meet br. Meshullam, God send us more of such people.—

Our crops this summer have been very good; the corn is very fine, and the white potatoes; also the sweet potatoes, which we brought have yielded well, and seem suited to this climate. The fruit is excellent and very plenty, and is the principal food of the Arabs.—We are building a comfortable stone house, and hope to get into it before the rain in November. At present we occupy a low room with two air holes next to the poultry-yard in front. Sist. Minor and Albert sleep in it; the rest of us sleep in tents. The weather has been very cool and pleasant so far.

October 4th. At one time when we were in great need of more money, and did not know how we could get along, we set apart a day for fasting and prayer to the Lord to send us help, though we know of no way, and after it sister M. continued without sleep all night in great distress, when in the morning early a stranger came on foot, an elderly gentleman, saying he had heard of us in Beyroot (150 miles from here,) that we were from America, and kept the Sabbath, and he came to meet with us that day in worship. He had a solemn appearance, and told his experience, that he had been in the United States 12 years, and had been a merchant near Pottsville 6 years, and that about 2 years since he had been converted in Europe, and was looking for the coming of the Lord, and had come to Jerusalem by the direction of the Spirit.

Afterwards we told him our case, and he wept and felt much for us, and imme-

diately decided to give us 200 dollars. He became much attached to us, and staid some weeks in Jerusalem coming out occasionally to see us. He became convinced of baptism and was baptized in Jordan by Dr. Barclay, and was greatly blessed. He believes fully in the literal fulfillment of the promises to this land, and expects to return and reside here next spring. He is a physician, and his name is Charles Zimple.

Last June sister M. and Emma and myself went on donkeys to see Jerusalem, and there to our joy we met dear sister Williams, who had come to live with us. She is a great comfort; teaches the children and sews, and has given some for the poor Jews. I am very happy to hear that father has lightened his burden, and that John and Eliza have bought the land, instead of strangers. If Leah writes again I wish dear mother would put a few words in to me; it would be like water to a thirsty soul.

We had several visiters from America this summer. If any one comes from America, they seem like neighbors to us. Can you believe that two oceans are between us, and that I am so near, where JESUS was born, and performed so many miracles? We have just heard, that some Europeans had been digging among the ruins of NINEVEH, and found Nebuchadnezzar's image. Its size is just as the scriptures describes it, and is of pure gold. The Sultan has sent for it. Last week fifteen hundred Jews arrived in Jerusalem, while many are coming gradually.

Oct. 6. This is the last day I can write; for the letter will go to-morrow. I hope it will reach you all in good health. Sister M. and A. send their christian love to you all, who know them. Mine also to father, mother, Eliza, Moses, Leah, Beata &c. and all enquiring friends. Yours truly

LYDIA SHULER.

P. S. If you write, direct your letter— —but you must prepay it, or else I would not get it. It is 57 cents. (Later letters stating that the writer has changed her place of abode, the direction in this letter would answer no more, and is therefore left out.)

(Many thanks for the communication of these letters, which are hereby returned. They are all very interesting, and will be so, no doubt, to most of our readers. There are however a few things necessary to a full understanding of them, which we could desire to see explained. For instance by the first letter we understand, that there were a number of persons in company with LYDIA, (eight in all,) who went to Palestine; but who they were; whether they were all females, and single persons? whether they undertook it on their own private responsibility, and at their own expense, or whether they were sent and are supported by some society? &c.—these are all questions which you could probably answer. But we would also like to know, what the true motive, the aim and object of this little company was to go so far from their own country. Whether they went out, like the ten virgins, to meet the Bridegroom in his coming? Or whether they had a missionary enterprise in view? &c. Again, who is this Mr. Meshullam? Of what nation is he? A Jew or a Christian? Why they did not continue with him, and why they have now a removal to Jaffa in view? If their object was, establishing a little missionary-church? And if so, what success they have met with thus far? What hindrances and difficulties they encountered from the Turks, the Jews and other Christian sects? &c. &c. Such questions we would like to see answered by your sister Lydia, and if you will enclose these lines in your next letter to her, and request her to send the answer to you, and you will communicate it to me, a lover of Christ's appearance, you will greatly oblige your weak fellow-pilgrim. Ed.)

TESTIMONIES AGAINST MAKING, VENDING AND USING OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

A dear brother wishing to obtain all the testimonies against the making, vending and using of ardent spirits by the brethren at their yearly meetings from the earliest accounts up to the present time, and having applied to us for that purpose, some time ago, we felt at once willing to comply with the request, yet were not able to employ the time necessary for the task until now. The brother wanted us to give the years, and the number of the queries, so that it may safely and without contradiction be referred to, and says, "Believing you have the Minutes from year to year, down to the present time, and thus having the means at hand, you are better prepared to give the information than any other one, and for this reason I trouble you on this occasion. Please let me know soon, and send the amount of the fee for your trouble, and I will have you compensated. (No, no, brother, no fee for our trouble; we do it freely, not only for you, but for the whole brotherhood.) The brotherhood here is represented as going against temperance, and I feel to defend them, believing they have always labored AGAINST *intemperance*."

Now, though we have not all the minutes of our yearly meetings, we will give what we have, which is as follows:

At the Yearly Meeting in CONOWAGO, Pa. in the year 1781. and consequently 73 years ago the last point considered was this:

"As regards the article about distilleries we unitedly and heartily advise all brethren, who have distilleries, that they should by all means try to put them away, in order to escape from those evils often resulting therefrom, and to avoid offence, and thus the brethren yet agree entirely with the resolution formed three years ago at *Pipecreek*, (Md.)"

At the yearly meeting held on PIPE-CREEK, Md. in the year 1783. the first article runs this wise:

"At this large meeting there has also for the present an unanimous conclusion been laid down on account of that very offensive evil, which has commenced to creep into the church, by which already much mischief has been occasioned, and inasmuch the counsel of the brethren was repeatedly given, that distilleries should be done away (by members) in the church, and yet from time to time there have been more introduced into the church, therefore it has been concluded at this time unanimously, that those brethren, who have distilleries, should be heartily admonished to put them away, and if they have been exhorted once and again in heartfelt love, and they would still not obey the counsel of the church, and would not put away this vexatious thing, then we could not break the bread of communion with them, and should also withdraw the kiss and church-council from them, and this so long, until they are again willing to be told, as they have promised in their setting out at their baptism before God and many witnesses."

At the yearly meeting on CONOWAGO, Pa. in the year 1789. the first article reads as follows:

"At the council-meeting of the Brethren it was considered unanimously as good and necessary, and we deem it also our duty (to testify) the following: Inasmuch we consider it our duty, obligation and office, to see to it, that union, peace and harmony may be preserved, that all should be united and be of the same mind, so that we may heartily love and be enabled to love each other

according to the command of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as he has commanded us, and by which we are to be known as his disciples, therefore it is our wish and desire, that every difficulty might be settled, and every offence be put out of the way;—and inasmuch there is a difficulty and offence about *distilleries*, because the brethren of old could not approve of them, and mournful experience has taught us, that almost whole families have been ruined thereby, and the children have fallen into intemperance and a vicious life, the brethren have already several years back come to the resolution, that they should be done away with. But it has not been done yet, and rather there have been more bought since, and thus the evil continues. This causes an offence and stumbling block, that scarcely one church can break the bread of communion with another, and it has happened already, that brethren out of love came from a considerable distance, but when they saw, that brethren, who had distilleries, were going to communion, they had to stand back, and go home again sorrowfully, because they could not commune in the emblems of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on account of that offence and stumbling-block. Thus is created offence, division and disunion in the church, for which cause we would again admonish in love all brethren, who have distilleries, to be diligent in putting them away, and exhort herewith heartily and in humble love all our in God much beloved fellow laborers, that they should use all diligence in exhorting earnestly such members, to obey this counsel of love, so that peace, love and union may be planted and multiplied. But him, who is not willing to deny himself, as it certainly should be, and cannot or will not obey out of love our loving advice, we cannot consider otherwise but as one, who has not yet died, and is not risen with Christ in newness of life, that he seeketh more after things temporal than things eternal, more the things on earth, than those in heaven, more the things that pass away, than those that remain, and that therefore he is in great danger to lose his eternal inheritance."

At the yearly meeting on PIPECREEK, Maryland in the year 1804. the two first articles run thus:

"It has been at this great meeting on Pipecreek unanimously counselled & concluded, that it neither should nor could be allowed to a brother or sister to keep a public house (tavern) by or with a license, because we are convinced, that it cannot be done without disorder, and is rather a hinderance to a godly life and quietness. It has been considered with one accord as best, that if a brother or sister should undertake to keep tavern, they should be visited in a friendly manner, and be dissuaded from it in the name of the church, yet in love and seriousness, and pointed out to them, what disorder and harm results from it. Further it is the conclusion, that if a brother or sister would not hear, receive and obey such counsel and admonition, then we would have to consider such as disobedient, and could have no communion with them. Yet sisters, who upon the urgency of their husbands are in bondage therein, though they would rather be free from it, but cannot without the consent of their husbands, we should consider more innocent (or less guilty) in the matter."

"Further it has been resolved unitedly, that no brother nor sister should meddle with selling strong drink, wine or distilled spirits by or with a permit by the quart or even greater quantity, because even by this there is to be

feared disorder and harm. Therefore all members, who should be engaged herein, should be earnestly and faithfully dissuaded from in long-suffering love, in order that such examples may not give license or offence to our youth and posterity. But if there should one or the other not be willing to receive such loving counsel and admonition, nor to hear the church, then we would not look upon such in an impartial spirit otherwise but as being disobedient."

At the yearly meeting at Big Conowago, Penn. in the year 1819.

"Art. 6. Whether it was not displeasing in the sight of God, that at funerals there is so much conformity to the world with a superfluity of drink as well as with extravagant tractaments of eating, more than what is necessary? This was considered, that all extravagance (and intemperance) in eating and drinking, together with all pride in apparel are abominable in the sight of God, which we should certainly avoid, so that the body of Christ and the body of the world should not be intermixed so much."

At the yearly meeting in the Glades, Somerset co. Pa. in the year 1821 the question came up:

"Art. 5. Whether brethren might or might not have distilleries? and was considered to leave it as it was laid down about 30 years ago, that it is not allowed to a brother to have a distillery, or to engage in that business."

At the yearly meeting near Canton, Stark co. O. in the year 1822.

"Art. 7. Concerning distilleries of members in the church it was considered, that it could not be allowed. They should be admonished to put them away, and if they would not receive the admonition of love, we could have no communion with them."

"Art. 9. If a brother has a sale (vendue) and gives liquor so freely, it was considered, that no brother should give liquor at the sale of his property."

At the yearly meeting in Morrisons-cove, Pa. in the year 1825.

"Art. 1. Whether a brother may keep and sell strong drink? Considered that on account of the many disorders originating from strong drink, it is not proper for a brother, and should not be at all."

At the yearly meeting held in Augusta co. Va. in the year 1827.

"Art. 5. Whether a brother in office (vergeseter—Speaker or deacon) may distill liquor or ardent spirits? Considered that it is not proper for any brother, and much less so for a brother in office."

At a yearly meeting held on Mad-river, O. in the year 1828.

"Art. 10. Whether brethren may have distilleries? was considered, that it should not be, even not by their children, as far as the authority of the parents reaches, and if such a brother will not take counsel, we could have no communion with him. Also selling grain to the distiller, (especially,) if grain be scarce, should not be allowed.

At the yearly meeting, held at Daniel Garber's in Rockingham co. Va. in the year 1832. the question came up:

"Art 3. Whether it is allowed if brethren engage in keeping store and selling strong drink? And it was considered, that the first might be permitted in cases of necessity, where members cannot make a living otherwise, but the latter in no case whatever."

"Art. 7. About the daily use of strong drinks, and especially in harvesting &c. was considered, that it should not be."

(To be concluded in our next.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(The following extract of a letter should have been inserted sooner, but had been mislaid. We commend the appeal of that "little flock" to the attention and loving heart of our fellow-laborers in the Gospel, who contemplate a removal to the West.)

AUBURN, DEKALB co. INDIANA.
June 14, 1854.

——I would just inform you, that we had a lovefeast on the 11th of the present month, and there were 8 members added to us, although we are like sheep without a shepherd, not having a teacher among us, that we might be organized as a church. The brethren told me, that should you see proper to make a small note in the Gospel-Visiter, that if there were any brethren speakers, that wished and had a desire of moving to the West, to call with us at Auburn, Dekalb co. Indiana, and we think, that he will be pleased with our country, and when he sees our situation for the want of some one to teach, he will consent to settle with us.——I will now close by requesting you to do all in your power to send us help in the good cause we have engaged in. There is the most encouraging prospect for a large church to be established here, if we only had a leader.

Dear brother, I remain your old and weak brother in the Lord

DAVID BRANDT, sen.

OBITUARY.

Communicated from Preston co. Va.

DIED on the night of the 4th of July last LYDIA THOMAS, consort of JACOB THOMAS, jr. She went to bed nearly as well as usual, but was somewhat restless during the forepart of the night, yet not to an alarming extent. Finally, as her husband thought, she fell asleep, and he went to sleep too; but waking up in about an hour, he found that she had really fallen asleep in death.

She was a pious and beloved sister in the church, and a light to the world; consequently we sorrow not as those who have no hope. She was the daughter of Michael K. Beeghly of Maryland. Her age was as near as I can recollect some over 23 years. She leaves a large circle of friends to mourn together with a beloved husband and a little one, who were the only persons in the house, when she died.

P. I. B.

From the same.

——Sometime in August of last year I transmitted to you an obituary notice of a beloved sister POLLY HAYS, consort of KIDD HAYS, and a daughter of Elder Thomas D. Lyon. She left this world of sorrow on the 1st of August 1853, aged 34 years and some months, leaving behind a kind and now mourning husband with 8 children, and one of them only 5 days old. As a wife, as a mother, as a neighbor and last but not least as a Christian she has left a vacancy, which will scarcely ever be supplied. As universally as she was beloved, so universally her departure was regretted. Her funeral-text was Rev. xiv. 13.

(This last notice was received in due time, and intended for insertion immediately. But by some means it was mislaid, and when reminded of it, could not be found. This was the reason, and the only reason, why it did not appear sooner. Had we known, that it might cause hard feelings, we should have written long ago, and stated the fact. Having a little leisure, and thinking it yet possible to find that lost letter, we spent nearly half a day in looking over our files, and lo and behold, when we had nearly given up our search, we found several letters, and the one we sought among them, in a file, where we did not look for, and least expected to find them. Your other communications are yet on file for publication.)

THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER.

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For the Visiter.

THE FIRST PROPHECY.

"And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. Gen. i. 26.

This is the first prophecy on record. It is to be remarked that this passage contains the express declaration of the original and ultimate design of God in creating man, or in other words, the primitive and final destiny of man. He was made in the image of God, and was to have dominion over the earth and all that is therein. This dominion is evidently yet future, and the prophecy, so far as it concerns mankind, yet unfulfilled. What little dominion we exercise over a part of the brute creation, often disputed and revolted against, is but a mere shadow of that real dominion after God's image, which we, according to the word of God, spoken before the creation of man, have to hope for.

Let no man say, that this original design of God concerning man has been given up in consequence of the fall; that the destiny of man has been frustrated by reason of sin. For the same destiny is expressly repeated *after* the fall by the royal prophet DAVID, Psalm viii. 4—8. where it is said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast covered him with glory and honor. Thou madest him *to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet; All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.* And again by the most enlightened apostle PAUL, Heb. ii. 5—8. who, referring to the foregoing words of DAVID, points us to JESUS, who as the express image of God became man, and having been obedient even unto death, is now crowned with glory and honor, all power in heaven and on earth being given Him.

By the same apostle we are informed, that this glory, honor and power was not obtained by Christ for his own personal and exclusive possession. For, says he, "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, *in bringing many sons unto glory*, to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. *For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one;* for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." And John, the beloved disciple, tells us, 1 John iii. 1—3. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, *and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be* LIKE *Him*, (that is, if we have obeyed and suffered like him, we shall be like him crowned with glory and honor; we shall like

Him be kings, and reign, rule and have dominion for ever) for we shall see him as he is."

Hence then it is most evident, that the original design of God in creating man will be most gloriously carried out, notwithstanding the fall; that glory and dominion was not only the primitive, but is also the final and ultimate destiny of man, and that just as certain, as this first prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ, so certainly it will be fulfilled also in those that are his; that are like him obedient to their heavenly Father in all things; that are willing to suffer with Christ, and to be sanctified by him.

There is even in our fallen nature a faint impression of that image of God perceptible in the universal desire in mankind *to rule and have dominion.* No man wants to be a servant, every one wants to be master. Only necessity compels us, either for a time, or as long as life lasts, to be servants of other men. Every one has a royal spirit within himself. But the royal child must be subject & obedient; even the King's son, who is heir to the crown, must first learn to obey, before he will be able to rule. A disobedient child or servant will never make a good ruler. That royal spirit within us has become by reason of sin thoroughly selfish, and has brought forth usurpers, tyrants and oppressors, who trampled under their feet the equal rights of their fellowmen, and caused wars, revolutions, and abject submission and slavery with all their concomitant evils, of which all past history, and our present experience bear witness.

But by grace we may be redeemed from this selfish spirit. By grace we learn from the word of God, that our present life is only a probationary state, in which we are like children "under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father." Even as Christ "was subject" unto his earthly parents, unto the tutors, and governors of this world, and above all to his heavenly Father; as he was kind in his authority, meek under provocations; humble and submissive, notwithstanding his being Lord and Master above all,—*washing his disciples' feet*; and obedient always & until death, yea the death of the cross;—so grace teaches us to follow his example, and to walk in his footsteps, as the surest way to fit and prepare us for our glorious destiny.

Brethren, the church of Christ is the royal High-school, established by divine mercy to educate the children of the heavenly King for their high destiny. Here they are to learn in the first place to rule and govern themselves, their own passions and desires, and to bring them into subjection unto the law of Christ. Here those, that are parents, learn, how to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and how to rule over their households, their servants, &c. so that they all may become acquainted with the divine order, wholesome laws, and blessed privileges of the house of God, and be induced to enter also the royal High-school as probationers and pupils.

Here are those pupils, who have already become somewhat proficient, to learn to communicate their knowledge to the younger and less experienced scholars, and to rule over them in wisdom and love as teachers and overseers in the household of faith, yet all being subject to the principal-teacher, the only Master, Jesus Christ, unto whom they, one and all, have to say their lessons daily, with whom they have to confer in every case of difficulty, and to whom they are accountable for every

misdemeanor, every short-coming, every abuse of authority. But if they only repent and humbly acknowledge their faults, Christ and their fellow-pupils are willing to forgive them, inasmuch we are all no more than learners, scholars, imperfect and liable to error withal.

But this state of imperfection will not always last. Our divine Lord and Saviour tells us, that when the day of reckoning comes, those who have been faithful over a few things, he will make *rulers* over many things; Matt. xxv. 21. 23. Again, "Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou *authority* over ten cities." Luke xix. 17. Again, "Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him *ruler* over *all* that he hath." Luke xii. 44. And again, "I appoint unto you a *kingdom*, as my Father hath appointed unto me." Luke xxii. 29. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. iii. 21. &c. Then this first prophecy will be fulfilled, most amply and most gloriously.

Brethren! Let this our glorious destiny, designed by our Creator, and restored by our Saviour, be held up frequently to the view of our fellowmen, and teach them, that just in proportion as we become faithful, obedient children of our heavenly Father, in that same proportion we will ultimately attain to our original destiny as surely as it has been foretold and obtained by our first-born brother, even our Lord Jesus Christ! Let us be content in this our present probationary state, to be like children "under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father!" Let us learn, and teach by our example to be kind, meek, humble, submissive & obedient as the surest way to fit and prepare us for our destiny!

And if we are intrusted already here with a tutorship and authority, as parents over children, as masters over servants or apprentices, as teachers over pupils, or as overseers and ministers over the household of faith,—oh then let us never forget, that those, over whom we exercise authority are either already, or at least destined to become "children of the heavenly King;"—that we are to love and respect them, inasmuch there is some remnant of the image of God and of a royal spirit in every man, woman or child, as to feel keenly every abuse of authority, every act of oppression and tyranny;—and that therefore "every man that hath this hope in him, should purify himself, even as he (Christ) is pure," from every selfish motive, from every desire of self-gratification and self-exaltation in using authority!!

Selected for the Visiter.

THE RUINS OF NINEVEH,

A Confirmation of the Scriptures.

After all the attention which has been given to Layard's discoveries among the ruins of Nineveh, we doubt whether the public mind in general is fully aware of the nature and extent of the confirmation which they bring to the truth of Scripture history. It may be useful here to set out, in the briefest form, specimens of some of the general results of these discoveries.

They show, in conformity with the tenor of Scripture, that the earliest ages were not, as many think, barbarous ages; but that the race of men, originally enlightened from a divine source, had at first, a high degree of general knowl-

edge, which they gradually lost through their defection to idolatry. It has been demonstrated by these excavations, not only that a high state of the arts existed in Nineveh a thousand years before Christ; but, also, that in the earliest ages of that city, dating but a few centuries from the flood, their sculptures were the *best*. In this remarkable result the Egyptian and Assyrian antiquities agree.

It is also proved, contrary to the general impression, that idolatry was introduced when men had a better knowledge of the true God than afterwards prevailed; that it did not grow up as a religion of nature by the ineffectual attempts of man to find the true God. But it was introduced as an expedient of men, in order to obscure what knowledge of God they possessed, because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. This is shown in the fact, that the earliest representations of God, found in these sculptures, are the best, and immeasurably exceed every thing of the kind existing in after ages; especially in their approach to the true idea of God. So that idolatry came in not for want of light, but by an abuse of light. Men knew God, and yet not willing to glorify him as God, became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

The Scripture accounts of the great antiquity of Nineveh and the Assyrian empire agree with these records dug out of the ruins of Nineveh. The Scriptures date the building of the city not long after the flood; and by the fact that the same marble materials have been used in successive structures, and that ancient buildings have been placed on the ruins of those still more ancient, and other unmistakable indications, the conclusion is made clear, that the city had all the antiquity which the Scriptures ascribe to it.

The monuments also bear upon them the records of the fulfilment of prophecy. Nahum prophesied that the city would be plundered of all its treasures so that none would be left. Layard has found, in all his excavations, nothing in the form of gold or silver; a fact which is remarkable, if the city had not been thoroughly plundered before it was burnt. The prophet foretold that the invaders would obtain easy access to some portions of the city; and that, wherever the inhabitants should resort to the strongholds, these would be burnt. Now, the ruins show just this result; that some parts of the city were destroyed by fire, and others escaped.

But a more striking confirmation is found in the fact, that inscriptions, on the ruins of one of the palaces, give the records of the military career of Sennacherib, with just such a series of conquests, and just such boasting of them, as the Scriptures ascribe to him. For instance, the Bible tells us that Hezekiah rebelled against the king of Assyria; that in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took from Hezekiah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty of gold. Now, compare this with the historical inscriptions upon Sennacherib's palace: "Because Hezekiah, king of Judah, did not submit to my yoke, I took and plundered forty six of his strong fenced cities and innumerable smaller towns, but I left him Jerusalem his capital city; and because Hezekiah still refused to pay homage, I attacked and carried off the whole population which dwelt around Jerusalem, with thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver." This agrees with the Bible account, except

in respect to the quantity of silver. As to this, the one account may describe what was delivered by Hezekiah, and the other the whole product of his plunder.

One chamber of Sennacherib's palace presents, in sculptures and inscriptions, the siege of the Jewish city, Lachish. The king is sculptured in royal pomp, on his throne, and over his head is this inscription: "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment before the city of Lachish; I give permission for its slaughter." In the Scriptures the destruction of the city of Lachish is represented to have been his most difficult work; and of course it was a victory on which he would most plume himself, as the sculptures show that he did.

Another instance appears in this, that in the historical sculptures there are marks of sudden and final interruption of the work, such as would naturally follow from the violent death of the king as described in the Bible.

In the ruins of Babylon there is no sculptured marble. The city was built all of bricks. Yet the bricks often have characters stamped upon them. In one instance a huge palace is formed of bricks thus stamped; and the same characters repeated, upon one and another; and these characters exhibit the name of 'Nebuchadnezzar.' The prominent characteristic of Nebuchadnezzar was his pride—such as was revealed in that speech: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Now, these ruins of the palace, in every brick of them, give just the echo of that boasted speech. Thus, after so many centuries, God has brought forth, from the ruins of these cities, voices in response to what the inspired penman has recorded so many centuries before.

THE MUSSULMAN CATECHISM.

(Conclusion.)

VII.

Of the decrees of God.

Faith in the decrees of God requires us to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth, that he has decreed not only things themselves, but also the mode of their existence, so that there happens nothing in the world respecting either the situations or the operations of beings, nothing regarding good or evil, obedience or disobedience, faith or unbelief, sickness or health, poverty or riches, life or death, which is not embraced in the decree and ordinance of God, and does not emanate from his sovereign will and righteous judgment.

It is necessary, however, to remember that God has decreed obedience and faith in such a manner that they are subjected not only to his ordinance, will and decree, but also to his salutary direction, his good pleasure, and his command; while, on the contrary, he has decreed disobedience and unbelief, and ordains, wills and determines them, only in consistency with his disapprobation and prohibition of them, and this he does by abandoning men in his wrath, or by permitting them to be led away through temptation. In all this his salutary guidance, his good pleasure and his command do not concur.

Whoever, therefore, shall dare to say that God rejoices neither in the good deeds nor the faith of men, or that he has no aversion for evil and unbelief, or that good and evil proceed from him in such sort that he decrees and wills both with the same complacency, is surely an Infidel. The truth is, that God wills what is good, but in such a manner that the good always pleases him; while, though he also wills evil, it is in such a

way that evil does not at all cease to be odious to him.

O gracious God, direct our steps in the right way!

VIII.

Of Ablutions.

Concerning the prescribed purifications it should be known that there are seven kinds of water proper for the purpose, viz rain-water, sea-water, river-water, well-water, fountain-water, snow-water and hail-water.

We acknowledge three principal ablutions or purifications; the first, which we call *Ghousel*, is a kind of Immersion; the second, called *Vodou*, is chiefly for the hands and feet; and the third is the *Ablution with sand*, since, in that ablution, sand or earth is used instead of water.

1. *Of the washing of the body, called Ghousel.* The principles or rules of this corporal immersion are three in number. First, there must be the intention to render one's self pleasing to God. Secondly, the body must be cleansed from all its defilements, if such there be. Thirdly, the water must be made to pass over the hair and over all the external surface of the body.

2. *Of the purification called Vodou, which is for the hands and feet.* This kind of ablution has six principles or sacred institutions. First, it must be performed with the intention of pleasing God. Secondly, the whole face must be washed. Thirdly, the hands must be washed, and the arms as high as the elbows, including the latter. Fourthly, certain parts of the head must be rubbed. Fifthly, the feet, including the heels, must be washed. Sixthly, the order to be observed is that in which the requisitions are here recorded.

3. *Of the purification with sand.* Concerning this mode of purification, which receives its name from its being performed with earth or sand instead of water, it is necessary to be informed that there are four prescriptions. First, it must be performed with the intention of pleasing God. Secondly, the face must be rubbed. Thirdly, the same must be done to the hand, and also the arms as high as the elbow, including the latter. Fourthly, the order here prescribed must be exactly observed.

IX.

Of Prayer.

The sacred institutions regarding prayer and its accompanying rites are thirteen in number. 1. The intention which precedes all. 2. The extolling of the name of God. 3. The formulary appointed for this purpose. [*God is great, God is great. There is no God but God. God is great, God is great. Praises are for Him.*] 4. The upright posture, or the most erect carriage of the body. 5. The recitation of the first chapter of the Koran. 6. The inclination of the body towards the earth. 7. The return to the upright posture. 8. The adoration or prostration of the face to the earth. 9. The posture of sitting. 10. The repetition of the sitting posture. 11. The final confession respecting Mohammed, the first (see above) having regard only to God. 12. The recitation of the formulary of that confession. 13. The observance of the order here set down.

The traditional (Sunneh) institution requires, in addition, these four things: 1. The announcement, or invitation of the people to prayer. 2. The second announcement, differing in form from the first. 3. The first confession, regarding God. 4. The form of prayer which constitutes that first confession.

The conditions required of him who prepares himself to perform his devotions are five in number. 1. That the members of his body be free from all manner of impurity. 2. That he be clad in a clean garment. 3. That he be in a clean place, where there is no possibility of contracting any species of defilement. 4. That he know the exact times appointed for prayer, and observe them punctually. 5. That in the act of prayer he turn his face towards the *Keblah*.

The prayers to be offered each day are of five kinds. 1. The prayer of noon, which requires four inclinations of the body. 2. The afternoon-prayer, which also requires four inclinations. 3. The vesper-prayer, to be offered on the approach of evening. This requires three inclinations. 4. The night-prayer, which requires four inclinations. 5. The morning-prayer, which requires only two inclinations. In all seventeen inclinations are required daily.

X.

Of Alms.

Alms must be given out of five kinds of property: from our cattle; from our money; from our grain; from our fruit; and from our merchandise.

There are three kinds of *cattle* from which alms should be given, viz: camels, oxen and sheep; and in order that this form of charity be executed in a lawful manner, six things are requisite. The giver must be a Mussulman; a free man; and the lawful owner of that which he bestows. His property in cattle must also have increased to a certain amount; he must have been its owner for the space of one year; and the cattle which he gives in charity must not be of those which labor for the tillage of his land & which are needful to him, but of those which feed idly in his pastures. (In bestowing *money* the same conditions in substance.)

The conditions of the bestowal of charity in *grain* are three; first, the grain must have grown upon land sown by man and not in a wild state; second, it must have been gathered into the granary; third, the bestower must be possessed of a certain quantity in order to be under obligation of charity.

The required alms in *fruit* consists of these two kinds, dates and grapes. (In order that they be lawfully made, the first four of the conditions of alms in cattle are required here.)

[Alms in *merchandise* are subjected to the same conditions with the first-mentioned.]

But it should be remembered, both with regard to all these kinds of charity now alluded to, as well as with regard to another kind, which is a sort of impost of charity, or capitation-tax, imposed at the termination of the great fast of Ramazan, one of the fundamental principles is the intention, or the inward resolution to bestow such and such alms as entirely due from us.

XI.

Of the Fast.

Three things are requisite to render the fast lawful and pleasing to God. The person fasting must be a Mussulman; he must have arrived at the age of puberty; and must be in his right mind.

The fast itself is based on five divine institutions. 1. The intention of the heart. 2. Abstinence from food during the day. 3. Abstinence from drink. 4. Abstinence from every kind of lightness of conduct and impurity, such as a kiss, an embrace, &c. &c. 5. Abstinence from all intention to vomit.

Ten things there are which may render the fast null. First, when the individual intentionally causes anything to enter the head by either of the organs of sense, such, for instance, as water or an exquisite odour, or subtile essences of any kind, or when any substance whatsoever is made to descend into the stomach. (The second and third have reference to certain internal applications of medicine.) Fourth, the fast is broken when any thing is intentionally ejected by the mouth, &c. &c.

XII.

Of the Pilgrimage to Mecca.

The divine institutes concerning the rites of this act of devotion, are five in number. First of all, there is required the *intention*, by which the devotee has inwardly resolved and religiously vowed to God to perform this pilgrimage. Secondly in the course of the pilgrimage, he must tarry one day in the mountain of ARAFAT. Thirdly, he must shave or shear the hair of the head in the val-

ley of Mina. Fourthly, he must make the circuit of the Kaaran seven times. Fifthly, he must run seven times from Sufa to Merva.

[This, then, is the catechism of the Mahomedans, of which there are more than 150 millions existing now in Europe, Asia and Africa. With this system of error and falsehood that part of the world was flooded, where Christianity began at first to flourish. It has now lasted above 1200 years, and even Mahomedans themselves believe, that it will not last much longer. Of things future it is difficult to say any thing with precision. We have, as a distinguished writer observes, however some reason to believe, from the aspect of Scripture-prophecy, that, triumphant as this sect has been, it shall at last come to nought. As it arose as a scourge to Christendom about the time that Antichrist obtained a temporal dominion, so it is not improbable but they will have their downfall nearly at the same period. The ninth chapter of Revelations seems to refer wholly to this imposture; "*the four angels were loosed*," says the prediction, 15th verse. "*which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.*" This, as some think, brings the final destruction of the Mahomedan empire to our own time. It must be confessed however, that though the event is certain, the exact time can not be easily ascertained. But, at all events, the present war acquires a new interest from these considerations, and if the Russians, French, English, &c. were, what they are called, 'CHRISTIANS,' that is, true followers of Christ, the Prince of Peace, and would spend their power and treasures for the conversion of the poor Mussulmans, instead of waging war against them and each other, how much more blessed would it be! But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.]

Extracted for the Gospel-Visiter.

FOR MANY ARE CALLED, BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN. Mat. xxii. 14.

Call, or calling generally denotes God's invitation to man to participate the blessings of salvation: it is termed effectual, to distinguish it from that external or common call of the light of nature, but especially of the Gospel, in which men are invited to come to God, but which has no saving effect upon the heart. Thus it is said, "for many be called, but few chosen." Mat. xx. 16. Effectual calling has been more particularly defined to be "the work of God's spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds with the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel."

This may farther be considered as a call from darkness to light; 1 Pet. ii. 9; "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar (or a purchased) people; that ye should shew forth the praises (or virtues) of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." From bondage to liberty; Gal. v. 13. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty." From the fellowship of the world to the fellowship of Christ. 1 Cor. i. 9. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." From misery or unbelief to happiness or peace; 1 Cor. vii. 15. "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." From sin (or uncleanness) to holiness, 1 Thess. iv. 7. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Finally, from all created good to the enjoyment of eternal felicity;

1 Pet. v. 10. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

It is considered in the scriptures as an *holy* calling; 2 Tim. i. 9. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." An high calling; Phil. iii. 14. "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;—and without repentance, (that is, upon the part of God,) as God will never cast off any who are once drawn to him; Rom. xi. 29. "For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." Num. xxiii. 19. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good? See also 1 Sam. xv. 29. and Psalms lxxxix. 35. and Titus i. 2. Heb. vi. 18. James i. 17.

It has been a matter of dispute whether the Gospel-call should be general, that is, preached to all men indiscriminately. Some suppose that, as the elect only will be saved, it is to be preached only to them; and, therefore, cannot invite all to come to Christ. But to this it is answered, that an unknown decree can be no rule of action. Deut. xxix. 29. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." And, 2 Tim. 3. 18. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." That as we know not or cannot tell who are the elect, we cannot tell but he may succeed our endeavors by enabling those who are addressed to comply with the call, and believe.

That it is the Christian minister's duty or commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. Mark xvi. 15. "And he said unto them, Go ye, preach my Gospel to every creature." Col. i. 23. If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." See also Rom. x. That the inspired writers never confined themselves to preach to saints only, but reasoned with and persuaded sinners, see also 2 Cor. v. 11. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."—And lastly that a general address to men's consciences has been greatly successful in promoting their conversion. see Acts ii. 23. 41. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day they were added unto them about three thousand souls."

But it has been asked, if none but the elect can believe, and no man has an ability in himself to comply with the call, and as the Almighty knows, that none but those to whom he gives grace, can be effectually called, of what use is it, to insist on a general and external call? To this it is answered, that by the external call gross enormous crimes are often avoided; habits of vice have been partly conquered; and much moral good at least has been produced. It

is also observed, that though a man cannot convert himself, yet he hath a power to do some things, that are materially good, though not good in all those circumstances, that accompany or flow from regeneration.

Such was Ahab's humility; 1 Kings xxi. 29. "Seest thou, how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house." Also Nehemiah's repentance, Jer. iii. 5. "Will he reserve his anger forever? Will he keep it to the end?" And Herod's hearing of John, Mark vi. 20. "For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man & holy and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly." On the whole, the design of God in giving this common call in the Gospel is the salvation of his people, the restraining of many from wicked practices and the setting forth of the glorious work of redemption by Jesus Christ.

P. R.

POETRY.

(The following has been communicated by several correspondents for insertion in the Visiter, before now. We thought at first, that the idea of a "Railway to Heaven" was rather inconsistent with the good, old way of pilgrimage, following the footsteps of our divine leader through the wilderness of this world towards the heavenly Canaan. We were afraid, that some readers would infer from it, that there was now found out a nearer, easier and quicker method to get to heaven, than the one pointed out in the word of God, as it seems to be believed by many now-a-days. Some comparisons appeared also to us rather forced and improper. But as it has been communicated again, in two somewhat different forms, we give them both, in hopes that the above will serve as a sufficient caution, not to make a wrong application of them.)

Communicated for the Visiter.

THE RAILWAY TO HEAVEN.

The road to heav'n by Christ was made,
With godly truth the rails were laid,
From earth to heav'n the line extends,
To life eternal, where it ends.

Repentance, faith, that works by love,
Takes trav'lers in to go above.
No fee for them is there to pay,
For Jesus is himself the way.

The Bible is the engineer,
It points the way to heav'n so clear
Through wilderness to go to rest,
Where saints will be forever blest.

God's love and Spirit is the fire,
Which drives the train and engine high'r;
All you who would to glory ride,
Must watch and pray both day and night.

Come on, poor sinners, now's the time,
Come all the world, in all your prime,
If you repent and turn from sin.
The train will stop, and take you in.

BARNABAS.

* * *

PARODY.

The road to heav'n by Christ was made,
With godly truth the rails were laid,
From earth to heaven the line extends,
To life eternal where it ends.

Repentance, faith, that works by love,
Each traveler needs, to go above;
"*Deny thyself!*" is all the fee,
For Jesus Christ has made us free.

The Bible is the *track* alone,
On which to reach the heav'ly throne,
To leave that *track*, is foolishness,
And brings poor trav'lers in distress.

But don't you walk the track alone;
There's danger all around you soon.

Clear off the track, there comes a *train*,
And try to get a place within.

The church is the *commodious* car,
In which we meet from near and far,
To journey on toward our rest,
Where saints will be forever blest.

Conductor, *brakemen*, *engineer*—
Are faithful men, to take us clear,
Through dangers in the wilderness,
And bring us safe to heavenly bliss.

God's love and Spirit is the *fire*,
Which drives the train and engine high'r,
But *water* plenty is needed sure
If we would get along secure.

For want of that disasters dire,
Have been occasioned by the fire,
All who would safe to glory ride,
Must keep close to the Saviour's side.

Where he stops, there our *station* be,
Refreshments he provides for thee,
All those who wish to go aright,
Must watch and pray both day and night.

Poor sinners, come! Now is the time;
The bell rings now in ev'ry clime,
If you repent and turn from sin,
The train will stop, and take you in.

LUKE.

* * *

"THE BIBLE IS MY PREACHER."

Said an aged disciple of Jesus, yesterday, while speaking of being unable to attend meeting, "Others can go to meeting; I cannot; but I have a preacher at home; the Bible is my preacher." And who has a better preacher? thought I, as I meditated on the saying as I walked homewards. I might rather ask, Who has so good a preacher? Let him go the world over, and he will not find the like.

1. *It is a plain preacher.* The doctrines are plain, especially such as are essential to the well-being of the hearer; and the language in which they are spoken is plain. No pompous, newly coined words are used, but such as can be comprehended by the unlearned as well as the learned. The meaning is plainer. It says not one thing while it means another. When it speaks of God's hating sin and loving holiness, it means so. When it declares that coldness, or lukewarmness, or the 'putting on of gold,' whether it be rings, necklaces, chains, or 'costly apparel,' are inconsistent with the Christian profession, there can be no reasonable doubt of the meaning of the same. So, also, when it affirms that "without holiness no man can see the Lord," the meaning is equally clear.

2. *It is a faithful preacher.* There is no softening down of the truth to save a shock of the head or the heart of the offender. There is no passing over a sin because its professor is honorable among men, or rich in the gold and silver of earth. All must be exposed. Though a fine article of dress, splendid equipage, or costly furniture is condemned, no matter—there is no shrinking. If a man be covetous, hates his brother, or deals dishonestly with his neighbor, he can find no place of concealment; he must be exposed. So, also, every good is encouraged, as faithfully as the evil is condemned.

3. *It is a powerful preacher.* "The Word of God is powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." What other preacher is found equal to this, even to discern "the thoughts and intents of the heart?" It has pointed arrows and sharp swords for the guilty. None are so stout-hearted but they must fall beneath its pow-

er, either to be raised in newness of life, or to remain slain for ever. It is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. Who can stand before such a preacher? Where can one hide from such mighty searchings? Alas! it will search him out even unto the ends of the earth.

4. *It is a compassionate preacher.* None can be more so. It "feels for other's woes." Though it slay the wicked, even so that none escape, it has always a word of consolation for the penitent. Never was such a one passed by unnoticed. The sorrowing, too, are always met with a blessing, be they ever so unknown among men. And whoever heard of a mourner that remained uncomforted who was willing to receive consolation in humility? Were ever the distressed left without timely aid, or the dying without support, who sought it? Was ever one tried or tempted who could not find deliverance? Oh, how many broken hearts have been bound up. How many mourners have been comforted, and how many enslaved have been set at liberty, and how many tears have been dried up. This no tongue can tell, no language can convey. It is written on many thousands of hearts, and can be communicated only in the language of eternity. There it will be revealed how many abodes of misery have been visited and made happy, how many of the cast down have been lifted up and saved, and how many of the distressed and sorrowing of every condition have been blessed by this inimitable preacher.

5. *It is a preacher of peace.* It has a message of peace for all—"Peace on earth." "Follow peace with all men," is an expressly enjoined duty that can be put by by no one, however rich or great—and another, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

6. *It is a preacher of holiness.* It gives no quarter to sin, whether in heart or life, in politics or religion. "Be holy," is the text and sermon to every age and name. It gives no leave for the merchant to ply his tricks of trade, nor for the common dealer in the affairs of life to cheat a little, if need be, to get the best end of the bargain, but preaches purity of heart and honesty of life to high and low.

7. *It is a preacher of benevolence.* No covetous man can sit at ease under its sermons, nor while away his time asleep, because it makes him feel; it touches his treasure, his purse, and heart, of course. Yet, what wholesome lessons of benevolence it teaches—"more blessed to give than to receive;" who believes this? Few, I fear. Then it is taught, one must give as God has prospered him. What excellent doctrines, how reasonable and right.

And what shall I say more of its glorious preaching? Indeed, time would fail me to enumerate its wonderful teachings. Thrice happy, then, is that person, whether the aged saint or the youthful Christian, who has such a preacher, and who loves and practises its precepts—happy forever.

A. L. C.

WORDS OF THE WISE.

True happiness consists in dependence on God, it is to have no will of our own.

It is far less difficult to act well than to suffer in silence.

No one knows anything of himself till he is tried. Trial is the touchstone of the character.

Dost thou love controversy? Suspect thy charity. Dost thou abhor all controversy? Suspect thy Christianity.

TESTIMONIES AGAINST MAKING, VENDING AND USING OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

At the yearly meeting on LOSTCREEK, JUNIATA co. Pa. in the year 1833.

"Art. 8. About the making and using strong drinks it was again considered, that it is a great evil, with which brethren should have nothing to do."

At the yearly meeting in CUMBERLAND co. Pa. in the year 1835.

"Art 8. About distilleries was decided as heretofore."

At the yearly meeting in MONTGOMERY co. O. in the same year.

"Art. 9. How is it considered, to sell grain to distillers? Considered that it should not be, particularly when grain is scarce and high in price; that ardent spirits are an occasion of much abuse and harm, and brethren should keep clear of it, using as little as possible for themselves, or when they have laborers."

At the yearly meeting on SCHUYLKILL, Pa. in the year 1836.

"Art 2. Whether it is allowable for a brother or sister to sell ardent spirits? Considered, that it should absolutely not be."

At the yearly meeting in WASHINGTON co. Md. in the year 1838.

"Art. 3. Whether it is proper for a member, to build distilleries, or to distil ardent spirits? Considered, as it has been these many years, that it ought not to be."

At the yearly meeting in MORRISONSCOVE, BEDFORD co. Pa. in the year 1840.

"Art. 11. What is to be done with a brother, who is erecting a distillery, and makes and sells ardent spirits?—Considered when such a brother has been admonished once and again, and will not be obedient to the counsel of the church, we would not break the bread of communion with him. Besides it is the advice of the old brethren, to dissuade all the members from the common use of intoxicating drinks, particularly at buildings, hay-making and harvesting."

At the yearly meeting in MONTGOMERY co. O. in the year 1840.

"Art. 4. How it is considered in case a brother keeps tavern with license to sell spirituous liquors?—This was by no means approved of, but the entertaining of strangers at a reasonable charge not objected to. Another query about selling cakes and beer &c. at religious and political camp-meetings was considered, that it is not at all proper for brethren."

At the yearly meeting in SOMERSET co. Pa. in the year 1841.

"Art. 14. Concerning the use of ardent spirits it was considered, that it is a great evil, leading to vice and crime, to destruction of peace and property, and to the ruin of body and soul, and that members of the church of Christ ought to refrain from the use of it except as medicine."

At the yearly meeting in FREDERIC co. Md. in the year 1842.

"Art. 4. How is it considered, if a brother or sister signs the pledge of total abstinence?—Considered, that in as much as our churches have always been testifying against *intemperance*, and even against the free use, the making and selling of ardent spirits, it is not advisable for members to put their hands to the pledge or to meddle with the proceedings and excitement of the world on this subject."

At the yearly meeting held in WAYNE co. O. in the year 1843.

"Art. 2. Whether a brother may refuse the kiss of a brother who hath committed a fault, for instance getting in-

toxicated, ere he has been brought and judged before the council of the church?—Considered, that though a member could not be required to salute another with the kiss, while in a state of intoxication, it is still our duty, first to tell the fault unto the church, and to await its decision, before we withdraw ourselves from a member."

At the yearly meeting in ROANOKE co. Va. in the year 1845.

"Art. 10. How is it considered, when a brother is carrying on a distillery?—Considered in the same light, as our ancient brethren did 62 years ago in an annual council-meeting held on Pipecreek in Maryland, June 7, 1783 where they said, &c." See above.

At the yearly meeting in LANCASTER co. Pa. in the year 1846.

"Art. 7. Whether a brother may work in distilleries for wages,—and whether a brother, who owns a mill, may buy, sell and chop grain for distilleries?—Considered, that (in as much) as the use of ardent spirits is always dangerous to the well-being of society, and the brethren frequently have testified against the making and using of the same, it would be best for brethren not to have any thing to do with it in any shape or form."

At the yearly meeting in FRANKLIN co. Pa. in the year 1847.

"Art. 10. Would it be proper for brethren to join the secret association of the "Sons of Temperance?"—Considered, that in as much as we are to 'prove all things, and hold fast that which is good;' and as the nature of secret societies is such, as to preclude the knowledge of them before a membership is obtained, we consider it improper for a member of the church to join such an order."

At the yearly meeting held in CARROLL co. Indiana in the year 1848.

"Art. 6. Whether brethren, and especially teachers can consistently with the Gospel and our holy profession, attach themselves to the Freemasons and the Society popularly called the "Sons of Temperance," and if not consistent, how is the church to proceed in such a case?—Considered that whereas the holy Spirit testifies by the apostle PAUL, (1 Cor. xi. 29.) "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body;*"—and whereas we are informed in holy writ, that the Lord's body is his church, of which we desire to be members, and HE is the head;— —that from such and other considerations and declarations of the word of God, the brethren have always believed, and do still believe, that it is not only *unbecoming* and *wrong,* but highly *dangerous* for brethren to attach themselves to such secret societies, or any association of this world, and if they should do so, they should be visited in love, (as the advice was 44 years ago in a yearly meeting at PIPECREEK) and admonished to withdraw themselves from such, and if they should do so, and acknowledge their fault before the church, the members might bear with them. But in case of a minister of the word having gone so far, not only to attach himself to such secret societies, but also to act as their chaplain and orator, it was considered, that such a brother ought to be silent in the church, until the members should feel renewed confidence in him again."

At the yearly meeting in MONTGOMERY co. O. in the year 1850.

"Art 8. If a brother or sister commits a gross crime, such as getting drunk, &c. can it be settled by any vis-

iting brethren without bringing it before the church, or what course is to be pursued in such cases?—Considered, that a brother or sister guilty of a crime, as set forth in the question, should be brought before the church agreeable to Paul's first letter to Timothy, ch. v. 20. 'Them that sin rebuke before *all*, that others also may fear."

"Art 37. If it is proven by two or three brethren, that a brother has been drinking to excess, yet not so much as to disable him from keeping on his feet; but has often before been charged, and also before been set back or put in avoidance, and still denies the charge: would he not come under the class of drunkards, or would it be prudent to hold him as a brother, or should he be expelled by the proof of four or five witnesses, though not members of the church?—Considered, that no member should be put in avoidance without positive proof from members, that he or she has been guilty of one of those sins, mentioned by Paul, 1 Cor. v. 11.

At the yearly meeting in Elkhart co. Indiana in 1852.

"Art 24. Have we a right to refuse the salutation of the holy kiss to a brother that is intoxicated with *strong drink*, or to one that is unclean by the intemperate use of tobacco?—Considered, that no brother could be censured, if he refuses to salute a brother intoxicated or unclean with using tobacco or strong drink."

At the yearly meeting in FREDERIC co. Md. in 1853. the following queries on the subject occurred:

"Art. 5. Is it right for brethren to have intoxicating liquors at public sales?—Considered as wrong, that should not be so at all, nor at any other gathering."

"Art. 6. Is it right for brethren to take a dram in public, when in perfect health?—We are of opinion that it has the appearance of evil, and should not be indulged in or partaken of at all as a beverage."

"Art. 18. Concerning brethren going security for dealers in ardent spirits, in getting their license to sell the same. —Considered that brethren should by no means do so."

"Art. 27. Whether it is allowed for brethren to distill fruit, or get it distilled and sell the liquor?—We say, No, not at all."

"Art. 38. Is a church justifiable in expelling a member for the crime of drunkenness so long as members generally continue in the custom, whereby men are made drunkards?—Considered, as drunkenness comes directly from moderate drinking, therefore every church should keep the advice of the yearly meeting to use no intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and then they can consistently disown the brother."

— — —These are the testimonies of our yearly meetings *against the "Making, Selling and Using of ardent or intoxicating spirits*, for more than *seventy-five* years, in as much as the oldest testimony, we have on record, refers still farther back to one, three years older, which was, no doubt, yet fresh in the memory of many living witnesses. We have spent considerable time and labor, in searching, translating and writing out these testimonies in compliance with the request of a dear and respected brother, whose object, to defend the brethren against misrepresentation, we could not but heartily approve of. And we rejoice to say, that our brother was not mistaken in his belief, which now by the foregoing testimonies is made a self-evident fact, namely that our brethren,

so far from opposing themselves to TEMPERANCE, have *always* labored against INTEMPERANCE.

And if we ask, Why did the brethren testify so strongly, and labor so constantly and unanimously against this evil and its causes, the answer can only be, because they feared God, they believed his word, and loved their fellowmen and brethren. They read in the book of God, Hab. ii. 15 "*Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken, &c.*" They believed also the testimony of the inspired apostle, when he said, that "the DRUNKARDS (with all other evil-doers) *shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" 1 Cor. vi. 10. And having "*the love of God shed abroad in their hearts,*" and being constrained by that love, they could not cease testifying, warning and laboring *against a* BUSINESS, which turns the blessings of God into a curse, and that, which might be wholesome food, into a poison;—*against* a TRAFFICK, which for filthy lucre's sake deals out that poison, while its evil consequence cannot be denied; and *against a* PRACTICE, which, if persisted in, will eventually, as it was emphatically said in one of the above conclusions, *lead to vice and crime, to the destruction of peace and property, and to the ruin of* BODY *and* SOUL.

[We cannot refrain from giving these testimonies an insertion in the Visiter, with the fervent hope and prayer to God, that their united weight may be duly considered by our dear readers, and serve as a warning to the young and inexperienced and to All, who may be tempted in this wise.]

FOR THE VISITER.

I MUST DIE.

"I must die," groaned the inebriate, and oh God! I must die an unreclaimed drunkard. I have spent my days in gratifying my insatiable appetite to the forgetting of my God and my duty toward him. And now my day is past and gone, and my soul, which bears the image of the Most High, which was brutalized and debased by the awful poisonous fire-water, must leave this wreck of loathsome clay, to take its flight unprepared to meet its God, and receive its awful doom of everlasting banishment from him. And if it had not been for the deep potations, that I drank from the cursed deadly bowl, I might have now been happy and prepared to die. But oh dark, dark looks the hollow gaping tomb, and darker still looks the fearful drunkard's hell, in which I am about to fall. Oh friends, take warning! Shun the cursed bowl which leads to death.

"I must die," cried a man of lordly wealth, who had hundreds of servants at his command. Yes my flesh must now be laid as low, as that of my most servile slave, and alas it is hard to die, for I have done that which is not the will of God concerning me. I have held absolute possession of my brother, and forced him to perform servile labor for me, which is against all the laws of nature and of nature's God. By so using the labour of him, who should have been free, I have lived in great pomp and splendor. But oh now they are like thorns in my side, and weights on my soul, to sink me deeper in perdition. Truly ease, abundance and luxurious banqueting, and many other good things of time and sense, will not save a soul from that awful hell.

"I must die," cried the beautiful young woman, who delighted in her fine and fashionable and costly apparel, and I have not yet made my peace with God, and I fear now it is too late; for

my cheeks that used to vie with the rose in color, are now pale with death. And my eyes that used to flash with delight while whirling through the dance, are now becoming dim and sightless in the cold embrace of awful death, which is a king of terrors to me. If I had but hearkened to the voice of those that gave me good advice, it might now be well with me. But I have persisted in the ways of sin, gave my heart to follow all the wicked devices of a fashionable, flattering world, and now I must go to reap the reward of those, that forget God. No sweet Saviour smiles upon my dying pillow to cheer my soul in this dark valley of the shadow of death. But dark, dark and dreadful is the wrath of God, that is settling on my poor soul, that must go to the dark abodes of the wretched. This is the end of those, that worship the fashions of this world, that are an abomination in the sight of God; for he will have the worship of an undivided heart or none at all.

"I must die," exlaimed an aged and hoary-headed man, that had spent a long career in the service of Satan, and how hard to die; for God has granted me a long life, but all that life I have spent in sin. And now in old age I must sink to the tomb unreconciled to my God, without the smallest hope that I will ever be permitted to be happy in the world to come. Oh death! cruel death! spare me a little longer, if but one week, to prepare to meet my God! But I have been so long in the service of the enemy of God, there remains now no hope for me. Oh eternity! oh eternity! How shall I endure thee? And death how shall I grapple with thee? Thou art a king of terrors indeed to me; for I cannot escape my God. Oh my dear friends look upon me, and take warning, and while life & health permits, seek your God, and make your peace with him; for I am now already in the place of torment. Oh God! is there no way of escape? Is there no hiding place for a wicked wretch like me? Farewell my companion and children, seek God and escape the wrath your husband and parent by sin is doomed to meet. Oh it is hard, to live hard and die hard!

"I must die," groaned the miser, I must die, and leave all my ill-gotten gold, that I have wrung from the poor widow and orphan, and ground out of the hard labor of the honest poor. Yes, misery and distress has marked my path, and many have been the tears, I have wrung from the eyes of the poor, as I greedily took from them the common sustenance of life. But now I must sink down into hell; for every tear is like a mill-stone around my neck, to sink me deeper into that awful lake. Oh shun the death of the miser; for he has no friends here below, and no hopes of heaven in the world to come.

"I must die," sweetly said the christian man, and O how easy it is to die; all is peace within and without, God is smiling now upon me, and seems to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter into the joys of thy Lord!" My dear companion, mourn not for me; for we soon can meet, where parting will be no more. O how glad I am, that I ever set out in the Gospel-road; for my mind is now happy. Death is to me a sweet harbinger of peace to call me home to God. O what a sweet scene begins to open upon my mind; my Jesus is near, his spirit is smiling on me now, he soon will take me home to glory. O thrice welcome, death! I soon shall be free, singing hallelujahs above. Dear friends farewell! Oh meet me in glory, where all will be happy; where death and sorrow will never come.

Now, dear reader, it is for you to choose which of these deaths you will die; for die you must.

Oh if my Lord would come and meet,
My soul should stretch her wings in haste,
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she passed.

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

CEPHAS.

A REQUEST.

From INDIANA.— To the editor of the Gospel-Visiter. You will please, ask through the columns of the Visiter for some brother or brethren, to give his or their best scriptural evidence of what it takes to constitute a fit subject for the ordinance of baptism. Please to insert soon if agreeable.

AN INQUIRER.

ANSWER.

Inasmuch as the query contained in this request has been answered so frequently in the columns of the Visiter, which might satisfy "an inquirer," if he wishes to be satisfied with the simple truth simply stated, we must suppose, our "inquirer" has not been a "reader" of the Visiter till lately, and as he is desirous of an early answer, we subjoin here the united views of our brethren, as they were expressed on the subject in a yearly meeting almost 40 years ago, without debarring any brother from giving his sentiments and a more explicit answer to the request of "an inquirer."

"At the big (yearly) meeting of the Brotherhood, which was held in White-oak Church, (LANCASTER co. Pa.) with br. JOSEPH HERSHE the 13th of May 1815, the following has been discussed and taken into consideration:

About complaints, which have risen in different churches of the Fraternity upon strange principles (or sentiments) of some members, that are considered with us as erroneous and not founded in the holy scriptures, while indeed the holy scriptures are to be the only foundation of our faith.—And inasmuch we live in perilous times, where many and diverse temptations arise, and also many errors make their appearance, so that weak minds easily can be confounded thereby, as scarcely to know, how they are to do in order to be saved.

And since now in our time there are among the many religious denominations and parties even such, who in the doctrine of repentance, and of baptism, and of the forgiveness of sins through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and of sanctification by the holy Ghost do not seem to differ much from the confession of the old brethren,—only that, according to our opinion, as we are taught by the word, they do not put every thing in its proper place. They require, that a man, before he is to be baptized, should have passed through repentance entirely, and should have a lively experience of the forgiveness of his sins, as also should have obtained a complete new birth, before baptism, and that they must confess this and be able to say, how they have attained to it; and that they are only then fit subjects by baptism to be received into the covenant of the grace of God.

It is even testified, that such expressions have been made in public meeting, that a man must have obtained already complete sanctification, or he would be baptized too soon. And to such confession or doctrine we see no foundation in holy writ, nor any exam-

ple in the whole New Testament. There it was required of those who made application for baptism, repentance or a change of mind; they were exhorted by JOHN to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, i. e. to lead such a life, as would accord with a change of mind. And of CHRIST and his apostles we do not find that any thing more was required of applicants than besides repentance faith in the Gospel, or faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

Hence we find no authority to require more of applicants, as there is founded in the word of God. We believe, that baptism is the commencement of entering into the New Covenant according to scripture;—we also believe, that the foundation, which Christ and the apostles have laid, is the only foundation, upon which we have to build, and that we have no right to change or amend any thing. We believe further, that the cases in repentance are very different; that some have much more to go through than others, and that therefore we should not lay down rules, because the scriptures do not give us any.

And since we cannot agree in those things above mentioned with such, who make things before alluded to an article of their faith, while the word of God does not teach us so, it happens sometimes, that hard expressions are made against the old brethren, for instance, that they were a heap of dead men, who had not yet come to a newness of life;—unconverted, who know yet nothing of conversion,—a dead, carnal multitude,—who were yet altogether in death,—that there was not one living among them, or he would not remain with them; and because they baptize too soon, they choke immediately again the new-born life of God, that they cannot come to perfection,"— and other similar expressions.

Such expressions do not proceed from love, neither do they build up love. We could freely let these good people alone, if they would only let us alone. It is a pity, it does not tend to union according to the word of Christ; it creates divisions and separation. It appears as if it were the design of such to lead the weak members of our churches away from their notions, and to cause a confusion, so that many members become doubtful of their own old brethren, because they are described to them as being so cold and dead. Such members we would advise and exhort in heartfelt love, that they should hold fast to the word of God, and not be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

And it is our advice to all overseers and householders in our churches, to exhort all the members to hold fast to the prescribed word of the Gospel, and if it should happen that some of our members should unite with such, and break the bread of communion with them, or receive them in their houses to hold meeting, while they yet remain in such separation toward us, such members should be exhorted, and if they would receive the advice, we should have patience with them.

But if they would not hear or take counsel, they could not remain in full communion with us. For the Lord Jesus and the apostles teach us, that we should be one, of one mind, speaking the same thing, and not to have divisions among us, and to this same end we labor also, through the grace of God to be obedient unto the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

For the Visiter.

ON REGENERATION.

Dear brother.—I feel like making a few enquiries of P. R. on regeneration, (see page 55 and 56 of present volume) where he divides and subdivides the subject, which I am puzzled to understand. To say the most of it, it is too much on the Calvinistic order to pass by without notice. I will first notice the 4th definition of terms. "Regeneration;—new birth; birth by grace." This is right, but in recounting afterwards the properties of it, he says, 3. "It is an instantaneous act &c." and to this I must object.

I ask, Did ever any one see a generation of any kind come to pass instantaneously?—Did ever any one see a grain of grass-seed generate a new blade of grass immediately after being put into the ground, or instantaneously?—And if not, how much less can we expect the generation of beings higher in the scale of creation to be instantaneous?—Is there not *first* conception, *second* growth to maturity, and *third* production to light and life in every natural birth? And if there is any analogy between generation and regeneration, between natural birth and the new birth, must we not at once see, that instead of its being instantaneous, it is also gradual and progressive?

First CONCEPTION. This is brought about by the power and agency of the Spirit of God, who convinces of sin, and leads the sinner to repentance, which prepares the heart, as the plow prepares the ground, for the reception of the seed. The seed is the word of God, the power to recreate, by which, when truly received into the heart, and not choked by the weeds, thorns and thistles, which have been naturally growing therein, and which are to be deadened by repentance, conception takes place. But bear in mind, that in the work of repentance, in the dying unto sin the soul must be actively engaged with the assisting grace of God, or there will be no conception.

Secondly GROWTH within. The best seed put into the earth, though it has received the inherent power from the Creator to produce its like, will not grow, if the ground into which it has fallen doth not nourish it, if for want of heat, or for want of moisture, no fermentation takes place. Too much heat without moisture, as we have lately seen and experienced to our sorrow in the recent, so widely-extended *drouth*, will burn up all life in vegetation. Too much moisture without heat will drown and thus kill the same. But the combined action of heat and moisture is necessary to the life and growth of every thing. Just so it is with the growth of the new creature within. The divine seed of the word of God must be nourished in the soul, and if the soul would fall into a deadness and inactivity, there would be no growth. Faith is the active principle in the soul in connection with repentance, to promote the growth of the newly-formed, yet unborn child of God in the heart of man.

Thirdly, COMPLETION OF THE NEW BIRTH. When the seed in the ground has once sufficiently rooted itself and grown within, in obedience to the law of nature in due time it will make its appearance above ground, and thus prove its life and existence. Even so it is in regeneration. When the seed of the word of God has fallen into a well-prepared heart, and has taken sufficient root therein, the new creature will be finally born into the world in *obedience* to the law, not of nature, but of grace, not of man, but of Christ, the Son of God. He will come forth in baptism,

which evidently belongs to the new birth or regeneration, in as much as the Saviour says, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." John iii. 5.

This is also plainly shown by the two passages, quoted by P. R. Matt. xix. 28. "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, &c." What had Jesus reference to? Was he by some supernatural power changed from a sinful state into that of life and righteousness? Or did he not rather mean to say, Just as I have subjected myself under the mighty word of God, and was baptized with the baptism of God from heaven, so ye who have followed me in that inward and outward act of subjection, which is that "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Spirit," spoken of by Paul to Titus iii. 5. (I leave this to the reflection of P. R.)

Certainly the Saviour had not sinned nor in any way accepted sin, and so he could only mean by their following him in regeneration the true acception of the whole word of God, and the being baptized, inasmuch as Paul undoubtedly calls baptism "a washing of regeneration," and in order to stop those who want to have so many mysteries about the new birth, or birth of the Spirit, he adds, "and the renewing of the spirit." So regeneration means a washing in baptism, as well as a renewing of the Spirit.

Let this suffice to show that the soul must have something to do in regeneration, and not be altogether passive, as LUTHER, CALVIN and many others before and after them would have us believe, in order to reconcile their infant baptism with regeneration, saying, that the grace of regeneration was exerted and bestowed upon man, while he was entirely passive, and that the light of grace could not be resisted. And I would say to P. R. if he is a brother, What have we to do with such strange notions, which contradict common sense, the law of nature, and the word of God? Let us abide by the simple word of God, and throw aside whatever is not in accordance with it.

If man is begotten again by the will of God, and if that will is his word; if we are begotten by the Gospel, which is the word of God, the evidence thereof is conviction of sin, repentance, conviction of righteousness, faith, obedience from love to God and his glory, &c. &c. which certainly are the very effects of the power of God, and belong both to conversion as well as to regeneration, and are consequently not passive, but active, nor yet instantaneous, but progressive as well as sanctification.

Whether the blessings of regeneration cannot be finally lost, is with me a question of doubtful disputation, with which we should have nothing to do, but rather seek to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

J. P.

(We were really glad for this article. We have a constantly growing pile of communications on hand, from which we have freely published those, which we, in our humble judgment, deemed best and most useful, or at least harmless. We even can scarcely avoid of giving occasionally an article, to which we ourselves have serious objections, and the sentiments of which we should not like to endorse. Should we reject those articles entirely, we would be accused of partiality, and give offence. Should we give our reasons privately to the writer, why we could not publish it, in nine cases out of ten, time would be wanting, and a hasty letter make things worse. If the writer is a preacher, he is likely preaching the same doctrine, he writes. He has perhaps but few books beside his Bible, and he imbibes unawares the

opinions of his favorite author. If in error, he should be set right, and there is no better way in our view, but to give his article a place in the Visiter, and to let any brother undertake the blessed task, of which James speaks, v. 19. 20.

This our beloved brother J. P. has tried to do in the foregoing article with reference to an article from P. R. in a former number, and having given a second article from the same writer in this present number, tinctured as strongly with Calvinism or predestination as the former, &c. we felt it our duty to this writer, whom we know not personally, and to our readers generally, to give the above as early as possible, and to explain here our motives and situation.)

Communicated for the Visiter.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God; of the doctrine of baptism, of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

This is truly a rich portion of scripture. It is also a plain text, so much so, that I scarcely know whether I am able to make it any plainer to the readers of the Visiter; but by the help of God, I will try to consider each part in turn. In this, my object will be to show, what is necessary for man in order to secure his salvation. For I hope we all take it for granted, that man *must* do his part, as well as God, if he expects to be saved.

This however is not a welcome doctrine to many professors of religion in this enlightened age of the world, and will therefore put me to the necessity of proving, that man must do a work, and without this the atonement of our Saviour, the merits of the blood of Christ, and the grace of God together with our simple or dead faith, is all of no avail. I take then this stand, that man must do a work, and this he may do by the grace of God; first, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. ii. 12. 13. This, however, is addressed to such, as have complied with the fundamental principles of the doctrine of Christ; but it nevertheless proves, that we must do the outward work, if God is to do the inward.

But another evidence: "Blessed are the dead, &c.—that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Rev. xiv. 13. Mark the language, *Their labors*, *Their works*, and not the Lord's labors, or the Lord's works. Much more might be produced in favor of my position, but these facts are sufficient, and I will therefore proceed to notice the principles of those labors, or in Paul's own language, 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ.' In the first place I will be likely to strike upon the duty of the preachers; because the two first principles must be preached to the sinner before we can expect him to comply with the rest.

First then I will notice, the doctrine of eternal judgment. Jesus Christ gave us to understand, that there will be a judgment, when he says, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. John v. 39. But another evidence of the judgment to come. When Paul was brought before the judge, called FELIX, I have no doubt he was glad of the opportunity of reasoning of temperance and righteousness, and of the judgment to come.

So it is our duty to do in order to awaken the sinner to a sense of his danger. But hear Paul preaching it again, As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after that the judgment. Heb, ix. 27.

The next of the principles is the doctrine of resurrection of the dead. Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which they that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth. John v. 28. 29. Read the evangelical record of the resurrection of Christ himself. Read also 1Cor. xv. and you have evidences enough to prove to any one, that will believe any thing that is written by inspiration, that the dead will really rise. Hence it is our duty to show to the sinner that there is a future existence, an everlasting being beyond the grave, and by these two powerful doctrines, the resurrection of the dead and of eternal Judgment he will be most likely to be pricked to his heart, and be ready to cry out, Men and brethren, what shall I do?

Next comes the doctrine of repentance from dead works. The sinner, we all recollect, is dead according to scripture language. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." John v. In this chapter there are two kinds of deaths spoken of, dead in sin and the death of the body or the flesh. But again, "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin." Thus we see that the sinner is dead even from this. Again, "Let the dead bury their dead, and follow thou me." And the sinner being dead his works must necessarily be dead too; hence the apostle calls it repentance from dead works. All the works you ever done, were dead works; you cannot derive any life from them, dead as faith without works is dead. Hence the necessity of the doctrine of repentance from dead works. Refrain from these acts of sin, reform your life; be sorrowful and sore amazed for your sins.

Need I search the Testament to bring testimony in favor of repentance? I will only tell you who preached this doctrine before us. John the baptist preached it in the wilderness, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Jesus Christ preached it, saying, repent ye and believe the Gospel. The apostle Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost precisely in the same manner, that Paul lays it down in the text. But I wish to mark the language of Jesus. Repent ye and believe the Gospel.

You must next *believe*. But do not suffer your belief to be a dead faith, no, but a lively and a practical faith. For this is the next principle of doctrine contained in the text, and of faith toward God. Now I would like to dwell some time upon this principle, but space and time will not admit. I will repeat the assertion that faith must be accompanied by works or it will die before it will do any good at all. Let us then see, what a practical faith is. By faith we understand the worlds were framed. Heb. xi. 3. Is it necessary to go back to the creation to see what faith is? Read if you please the whole chapter Heb. xi. and you will find that all those good old men that the apostle speaks of, done a certain work which is closely connected with the faith that Paul recommends them so highly for and this faith, this practical faith toward God is another of the principles of the doctrine of Christ.

To be concluded in our next.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

From HENRY co. O.—I will now state a little about our situation. We live here alone; no brethren nearer than about 40 miles. But when I think upon the promise, that the Lord has given, "Where two or three are gathered together, I will be in the midst of them;" I rejoice to know of one good friend to be with us. Yes, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Now when I reflect and think of the past, I find, that I have not lived up to my duties, as I should have done. May the Lord pardon and give me strength to overcome that evil that does so easily beset us. We feel often encouraged by reading the Gospel-Visiter.— Pray for us as weak members of the church, that we may hold out faithful to our end. Ever since we belong to the church, we lived in a congregation in Sandusky co. O. It is now nearly two years that we moved to Henry co. where there is no congregation. We sometimes feel very lonesome. We pray the Lord, that he would send a laborer into this part of his vineyard, that more might be grafted into the true vine. Brethren, that travel up & down the MAUMEE river, we would be very glad, if they would visit us. We live about three miles and a half North of Texas.— —

JOHN HENRICKS.

☞CAUTION.☜

By a law passed by our Ohio State-Legislature we are prohibited from the first day of this month—(OCTOBER) to receive or pay out any bank bills of other states of a less denomination than Ten Dollars. Our subscribers will please to take notice of this, and try to send us Ohio-bills, for amounts under Ten Dollars.

INFORMATION WANTED.

Of brother HENRY SNIDER, who did live near BOLIVAR, Tuscarawas co. O. but has not been heard from for several years. His friends, and especially a sister of his, who is very poorly, and counts her days to be but few on earth, are anxious to hear of him once more. Direct letters to

GEORGE M. HOLSINGER,
ALUMBANK, Bedford co. Pa.

OBITUARY.

DIED near WAYNESBORO, Franklin co. Pa. on the 7th of August Sister ELIZABETH HOLSINGER, consort of JACOB HOLSINGER, aged 77 years 1 month and 26 days.

She had become obedient to the faith in her younger years, and died, as she lived, a worthy and beloved sister in the Lord. Her funeral-sermon was preached by the brethren from Rev. xiv. 13. "*And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.*"

By a private letter we learn the death of two speakers in Augusta co. Va. who both died within less than a month. Br. JOHN GARBER, an ordained elder, died on the 17th of July, age not mentioned, and br. PETER MILLER, also (if we mistake not,) an ordained elder, died on the fourth of August, in his 69th year. The removal of two ordained elders in one church, so soon after each other, might be considered a remarkable act of providence, and a very distressing bereavement of a church, well deserving a long comment; but our brethren in Va. have given us no more but the bare facts above stated, and hence we add no more.

THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER.

VOL. IV. November 1854. NO. 6.

For the Visiter.

WE WOULD SEE A SIGN FROM THEE.

The following was sent us lately from Indiana.—

"I would like you or some of the brethren to give us an explanation on Mark xvi. 17. 18—The reason is, there is a man here in our neighborhood, wearing his beard, who agrees with us in every thing, but thinks we should be able to raise the dead, and open the eyes of the blind, that is, we should do miracles as our Saviour did. I had a talk with him a few days ago, and he told me, if we would convince him in that point by the Gospel, he would become a member of our church. "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Go on, my brethren; I am bound,
A pilgrim with you here.
Although we tread enchanting ground,
Be bold and never fear.

Fight on, fight on, ye valiant souls,
The land appears in view;
I hope to gain fair Canaan's shore
And there to meet with you."

J. K.

We read of some coming to our Lord, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. Matt. xii. 38. 39. xvi. 1. Luke xi. 16. Mark viii. 11. 12. It appears, they were not satisfied with those signs and miracles, which they could daily have seen, if they had followed Jesus; they were not satisfied with those things, which they could hear and see: the blind receiving their sight, the lame walking, the lepers being cleansed, and the deaf hearing, the dead being raised up, and the poor having the Gospel preached unto them. They wanted to see a sign for their own particular benefit, an extraordinary sign, a sign from heaven, merely to gratify their curiosity &c.

Thus there are men even to this day, coming to Christ's church, saying, we would see a sign from thee. They cannot deny, that the church now is and must be the same, as it was eighteen-hundred years ago, though there may be as much difference between her condition now and then, as there was a difference between "Anna, the widow of about fourscore and four years," (Luke ii. 37.) and the very same Anna, when she was a blushing virgin-bride. They cannot deny, that the church has yet the same apostles' doctrine, the same ordinances, the same discipline as in the days of primitive Christianity. They might even now see the signs of the eyes of the blind opened, and sinners turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus.

But still they ask for a sign, and surely there will be no sign given to them, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

Yes, the very existence of the church of Christ, notwithstanding it was apparently swallowed by the persecutions of Jews and Gentiles in the first ages, by the apostasy and corruption of a worldly-minded church in the following age, by the flood of Mahomedanism, by the persecutions of nominal Christians, by the combined power of earth and hell, of men and devils, this very existence of the church of Christ is the standing sign, to which we are to point, according to Christ's example, those who are seeking after a sign.

However it seems that from Mark xvi. 17. 18. men have a right to ask for miracles of those that believe, inasmuch as it is there said, "*And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*" We freely admit, that if our Saviour had said, "These signs shall follow *all* them that believe, *at all times*, we would have a right to look and ask for these signs. But when we find, that in the body of Christ, of which every believer is a member in particular, "God hath set *some (not all)* in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that *miracles*, then *gifts of healing*, helps, governments, diversities of tongues;"—and that the apostle, by the inspiration of the holy Ghost, asks, Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all *workers of miracles*? Have all the *gifts of healing*? Do all speak with tongues?"—it is evident, that those signs did not follow *all* them that believed even in the apostles own time; see 1 Cor. xii. 27—30.

Let us take particular notice, that while the promise of miraculous gifts, expressed in Mark xvi. was fulfilled obviously, literally and completely, even in the apostolic age, as we have ample testimony in the divine record, yet it cannot be proven by the words of the Saviour, that the promise was given *to all believers at all times*;—and that on the other hand it is expressly testified by the apostle in the most emphatical manner, that *not all* the members of the body of Christ in the first age of the church were *workers of miracles*, even *not many, but only some*, and from the whole tenor of the Gospel-history we must conclude, only *a very few* in comparison with the multitude of Christians.

So few indeed were the persons gifted with miraculous powers that beside the apostles, of whom it is said, that "many wonders and signs were done by them." Acts ii. 43. and again, "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people," Acts v. 12. we find *only one* other mentioned by name, STEPHEN, the first martyr and one of the *seven* chosen men in the church at Jerusalem, of whom it is said, that he, "full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." Acts vi. 8. And if we do not read a single instance, to our humble knowledge, that *Barnabas* and *Silas*, the companions of *Paul*, or *Apollos*, the eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, or *Mark* and LUKE, who each of them wrote a Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the latter also the acts of the apostles, or TIMOTHY and TITUS, who were both charged by the apostle Paul to set in order the things that were wanting in the churches,—I say, if we do not find a single instance of these men, that they did perform any miracle, we are compelled to conclude, that the number of "workers of miracles" must have been

very small indeed, even in the apostolic time, and that the power of performing them was chiefly confined to the apostles themselves.

Moreover, let us enquire for what purpose these miraculous gifts were bestowed upon men? The same evangelist MARK, who after relating the commission the Lord gave to the eleven, when he said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned;"—mentions also the promise of the signs that should follow them that believe, concludes his account with these words, "And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and *confirming the word with signs following.*" Here we have the answer to our query, what was the design or purpose, for which "these signs shall follow them that believe." It was no other but TO CONFIRM THE WORD the apostles preached.

Now the word, the apostles preached, was no other than the Gospel, or the Last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. But this *Will* was not committed to the apostles in *writing*, when they received their commission. They could not refer to a *written* Gospel, divinely authenticated, then. And though this last will and testament of their Lord and Master was written, signed and sealed on the tablet of their hearts, by having heard it from the Lord's own lips, having seen the many wonderful deeds he had performed; yea, having seen the Lord sign it with his own blood, and seal it with his glorious resurrection,—yet their united testimony, in itself, would not have confirmed the word in the eyes and hearts of an unbelieving world. It would have been no more than a *human* testimony, not sufficient to prove a *divine* doctrine.

But when from the day of Pentecost "God himself also was bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his own will;"—when thus the last will and testament of our heavenly Father, was proved, confirmed in the court of heaven before God, and men, and angels, and finally recorded in writing, and deposited in the indestructible archives of the church;—when this record, containing the written, separate testimonies of at least *six* or *eight* original witnesses, (six apostles viz. *Matthew, John, Peter, Paul, James* and *Jude*, and two evangelists, *Mark* and *Luke*,) bears all the internal and external marks of a true and authentic record;—in a word, when the Gospel was proved, confirmed, ratified and recorded with signs following eighteen-hundred years ago, have we a right to ask for signs now, to prove, confirm and ratify it again??—

We answer most emphatically, No, No, NO! For in the first place SCRIPTURE says, No; In the second place REASON says, No; and in the third place CONSCIENCE says, No. Let us consider and try to substantiate these three items. We say then

1. SCRIPTURE gives us no right to ask for a sign. This is evident from the passages already alluded to. It is more evident from the fact, that the greatest signs and miracles, our Saviour and his apostles did, were performed *unasked*, as every diligent reader of the New-Testament will observe. And it is most evident from the other fact, that in every case where a sign was asked for, the demand was rejected and repudiated. See those passages first referred to. Hence we conclude, it is antiscriptural to ask for a sign.

2. Reason gives us no right to ask for a sign. When the last will of a *man* has been once proved and confirmed in court in a proper, legal manner, and no legal objections can be made either against the will or the proceedings of court, the will is ordered to be recorded, and the executors authorized to proceed according to the will. Now suppose there were some absent or minor heirs and persons interested in the will, who would come after many years, one by one, and say, "We have read the copy of the will; we are satisfied with the provisions and conditions of the same; we agree in all respects with the other heirs; but as we have not been present at the proving and confirming of the original will, we want it proved and confirmed again now." We ask, Would not this demand be deemed unreasonable and preposterous?—and leave the application to the sensible reader.

3. Conscience gives us no right to ask for a sign. By conscience we mean that inward sense of right and wrong, of which every man or woman is possessed in a greater or less degree. Had those who came to our Lord, saying, "Master, we would see a sign from thee," given ear to the still, small voice within, even to the whisperings of their own conscience, it would have condemned their seeking after a sign as wrong and sinful; it would have told them, that they had no proper motive for it; that they were an evil and adulterous generation, —not willing to forsake sin,—not willing to forsake the vain traditions of men,—not willing to give up themselves to God entirely and unreservedly. Their adulterous love to the world made them unwilling to submit to the lowly Jesus; they despised the counsel of God against themselves, and were not baptized; and for an excuse and cloak of their unbelief they asked a sign, which they had no reason to expect being granted. Let those who now-a-days seek after signs, and wonders, and miracles, search their own hearts and consciences, and they will be told, that it is wicked and sinful to do so, and if they do not repent, that they will die in their unbelief.

We have been rather more prolix in our remarks on this subject, than we intended at first, because we know, our brethren are often puzzled with regard to the true sense of Mark xvi. 17. 18. We might have said much more, and had to pass by a multitude of reflections, which occurred to our mind, while we penned the above; but let this suffice for the present. We have used great plainness of speech, because Satan tries to make this a hiding-place for many, who are under strong convictions of the truth, and would be *almost* persuaded to become Christians. We love and pity them, who are thus prevented from the full obedience to the Gospel, and from a pure motive we have said, what we said. Let them take our simple, honest remarks kindly, and may the Lord add his blessing.

We are well aware, that false churches, old and new, which we could name, have pretended to a continuance of miraculous powers. Pious (or rather impious) fraud, combined with superstition and credulity have produced a multitude of prodigies and lying wonders, which should scarcely be mentioned in connection with the miracles, by which the Word was confirmed. The question, Whether the true church should not also be able now, to confirm the word they preach with signs following, so as to counteract the influence of those false prodigies? has been already substantially answered in the foregoing,

and we will only add, that if we pay due attention to the word, we find the giving of the power to work miracles is a prerogative of the Lord. *"He gave them power,"* &c. Matt. x. 1. Mark iii. 15. vi. 7. Luke ix. 1. It was *"the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following;"* Mark xvi. 20. and—take notice!—he did so *"according to his own will."* Heb. ii. 4.

Now the Lord *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever;"* if he saw fit, if it was "according to his own will," he would not be wanting power to-day, to do as yesterday,—as of old, working with his servants, and confirming the word with signs following; yea even such signs, of healing, of casting out devils, and of working miracles. If the Lord however in his wisdom does withhold those signs, *because of the prevailing unbelief,* then let us remember, that while he was personally on earth, there were times and places, where he could do no such miracles, for the same reason, *"because of their unbelief,"* Matt. xiii. 58. &c. and also because the scriptures were to be fulfilled. Would Christ have been betrayed? Would he have been delivered into the hands of sinners? Would he have suffered and died the ignominious death of the cross, &c. if he had exerted his miraculous powers to prevent it? Reflect, dear reader, on these things.

Again, if it be asked, Has then the Lord left us, left his church, his servants alone, no longer "working with them, and confirming the word with signs following"?—we answer, No, no; *the Lord* IS *and* WILL be *with his faithful servants "always, even unto the end of the world;"*—he is working with them, and though the apostle's word has been confirmed long ago, and needs not the repetition of those signs of which we speak, the Lord still condescends to confirm the word with other signs, equally palpable to the believer's eye, if not to the unbelieving world; equally wonderful, equally beyond the power of a mere man, and consequently equally divine. Or, permit me to ask, Is it a less manifestation of divine power, if the spiritually blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak and the spiritually dead arise?

Finally let us thank God, that we are yet permitted to enjoy THE BEST GIFTS, 1 Cor. xii. 31. which are described in the following chapter, and summed up in the 13th verse, where the apostle says, *"And now abideth* FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, *these three; but the greatest of these is* CHARITY." Oh my brethren, let us earnestly and diligently cultivate these best gifts;—let us daily pray for a greater measure of them;—let us daily exercise them by reading, obeying and practizing the word of God; and other signs will follow the believer; to one will be given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith &c. 1 Cor. xii. 8–10. And what *'the prayer of faith,' the prayer in the name of Christ* may accomplish, see John xvi. 23. James v. 15–18. &c. &c. Surely, true believers are not lacking *signs following,* and of unbelievers we may say, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, nor Christ and the apostles, *"neither will they be persuaded,* THOUGH ONE ROSE FROM THE DEAD." Luke xvi. 31.

Let none say with the Pharisee,
I wish to see a sign from thee!
To faith true signs*) are *freely* giv'n,
And they will guide us safe to heav'n.

*)The ordinances are such signs too

For the Gospel-Visiter.

ON INFIDELITY.

Who is it, that dares not trust himself forever in the hands of a just God, but wishes to escape out of his hands? Though it were by resigning his being, it is not the force of argument that drives our infidels to this demonstration, and certainly were never so much as pretended for it. And after all the pains they take to work themselves up to the gloomy hope, that when they die, they shall escape punishment by the loss of all the sweets of existence; yet if I may venture to guess at the secret, they are often alarmed with the dreadful may-be of a future state of existence.

Yes in their solemn and thoughtful moments their hope wavers. They are men of pleasure; they are merry, social and gay; and give a loose to all their licentious passions and appetites. But alas, how short, how sordid, how brutal the pleasure; how gloomy, how low, how shocking their highest hope! Their highest hope is to be as truly nothing in a few years or moments hence, as they were ten thousand years ago. I say they are men of pleasure, who would lose all their pleasures, if they were angels in heaven, but would lose none of them, if they were swine in the mire.

But we rejoice to know, this gloomy hope is not the hope, which the religion of Jesus inspires. No; he hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. He opens to the departing spirit the endless prospects of a future state of being,—a state where death shall no more make such havoc and desolations among the works of God, but where every thing is vital and immortal. Hence the believer hath hope in his death; he has not made it best for him, that his religion should be false; he is not driven to seek for shelter in the gulf of annihilation, nor to combat with the blessed hopes which reason and revelation unitedly inspire, as his worst enemies; he wishes and hopes to live forever, that he may forever enjoy the generous pleasure of serving his God and doing good to his fellow-creatures.

The belief of immortality is not indeed peculiar to the righteous; it is the belief of mankind in general, except a few infidels, here and there, who are to be regarded monsters in human nature. But this is not so properly the object of hope as of fear to multitudes. They wish it were false, though they cannot believe it is so. No, they have no joy and peace in believing this; but, if I may use the phrase, like devils they believe and tremble. But to him, that believeth, it is a glorious hope; the prospect is pleasing to him. If it were a dream, which, blessed be God, it is not, it is a pleasing dream; if it were a delusion, it is a harmless, profitable one. It inspires him with noble pleasures, and excites him to glorious deeds, while life lasts.

Oh how pleasing to the offspring of the dust to claim immortality as his inalienable inheritance! How transporting to a soul just ready to take its flight from the quivering lips of the dissolving clay, to look forward through everlasting ages of felicity, and call them all its own; to set and prognosticate and pause upon its own futurities;—to defy the stroke of death and smile at the impotent malice of the gaping grave!—Religion is a glorious treasure,

Diffusion of the Saviour's love,
The Spirit's comfort without measure,
Which joins our souls with those above.
It calms our fears, it soothes our sorrows,
It smooths our way o'er life's rough sea,
While endless ages are onward rolling,
This heav'nly portion ours shall be.

L. D.

THE BIBLE.

"The place which the Bible occupies in the history of the world knows no parallel. As a system of objective truth for a fallen race, it admits of no improvement and of no increase. There are no heights nor depths, no lengths nor breadths, which are not already included in it. Of self-advance it can know nothing; it is already at the goal; its only grief is that man will not follow. All his wanderings it has foreseen; all his emergencies provided for. Its scheme was laid at the first on the calculation of every element on man's nature, and every combination of which those elements admit. Its march through time has been marked by a train of blessings. Silently as the light it comes, and the darkness of ages flees before it. With the majesty of law it comes, and the anarchy of evil subsides into order and peace. There is no form of guilt which it has not vanquished, no intensity of anguish which it has not assuaged. And still it awaits each succeeding generation, on a higher level, and at a new starting point, beckoning the way to unattained heights of knowledge and excellence."

THE LOST CHILD.

In the far West, a little child but five years of age got lost. The whole neighborhood, which was but thinly settled, was engaged in hunting the child. The mother and father, both of whom were pious, were overwhelmed at the thought that their dear little daughter was lost. The night was coming on. There were panthers, and bears, and wolves in the woods. Every nook and corner of the adjacent woods were searched, for a mile or two around the dwelling; but the child could not be found. The parents wept and prayed, and grew almost frantic. Night set in, but the search was kept up. With torches and trumpets, they went in every direction, looking every where for the lost child. At last, in the middle of the night, it began to rain, and rained very hard for some time. But the child could not be found.

The day broke, and all renewed the search. They knew that unless they succeeded in finding her, she must perish of hunger. All hope at last was nearly given up. They had passed over every foot of ground within two or three miles of her home. The sun was going down the second day. The parents, overcome with distress, sat down to weep, thinking they should never see their beloved child again. The search had now been carried on with diligence for the space of thirty hours.

One of the party had gone the distance of four miles from the house from which the child wandered. The evening was approaching. He was working his way through a tangled thicket, upon the edge of a pond of water. He was stopped by a faint sound that fell upon his ear. He listened. He heard a human voice, soft, plaintive and sad. He drew a little nearer, straining his eye and ear to discover the object. He stood still, and listened, and he heard the words: "Oh, I wish my mother was here; for I want something to eat. I am hungry and cold." And there, upon the ground, on the edge of the water, he found the lost child. He carried her home rejoicing; for the child that was lost was found. The dear little girl said that, when night came on, she was tired and sleepy, and that she got down upon her knees and said the pray-

or that her mother taught her, and then went to sleep, without being afraid. She said she saw a bad looking animal that came near her, and that she prayed to the Lord to take care of her, and the animal did not trouble her. She was hungry and ate some berries. God takes care of little children.

We are all lost in our sins. We have all wandered from our Father's house & gone away from God. Christ the Saviour came "to seek and save that which was lost." Let us commit our bodies and souls to Him in well doing, and we are safe for time and eternity.—

C. P.

ABOUT OUR YEARLY MEETINGS.

Ever since we received that document, which we published by request in Sept. No. page 84. we felt more and more strongly the urgency and necessity of saying something on the subject of our yearly meetings, as it was charged upon us by our beloved brethren at the last annual meeting. When we reflect, that in former years *one single church* was amply able, without too great inconvenience and sacrifice, to entertain such meetings;—that in later years the increase of the church, the increase of the population, and other causes brought such crowds to these meetings, as to make them really burdensome to that church, where one of them was to be held, so that a few neighboring churches felt it their duty, to assist by free-will offerings;—and that the evil has been and is still increasing to such a degree, as to make it almost impossible for one church, even with the assistance of some few contiguous churches, to take and entertain the yearly meeting;—when we reflect upon these things, it seems indeed to be high time, to take the matter into deep consideration.

But the facts, disclosed in that document before alluded to, are calling still more loudly and imperiously for an early investigation of the matter, and for a remedy, if there is one, to be applied to this great and growing evil. The single fact, exhibited in said document that in order to bear the expenses of last yearly meeting it required the contributions of no less than SIXTEEN different congregations, located in at least THIRTEEN counties of our state, is, methinks sufficiently startling, to awaken the attention, and to rouse the feelings of every brother and sister in our widespread fraternity. The questions will obtrude themselves to every reflecting mind, What will be the consequence, if the evil increases in this way? What will become of our yearly meetings, when churches will become discouraged on account of the intolerable burden to receive them?. What will become of our churches, when no yearly meeting can be held any longer?

These are weighty questions to be considered by all, and as we have no fear yet, that the evil is irremediable or incurable, if we are all willing to act in concert, and to unite in removing it, we present the following queries for the consideration of all, and would like to see answers to each from every brother of the last standing committee.

1. What is the real nature and extent of the evil in regard to our yearly meetings?

2. What are the immediate or remote causes of it?

3. What may be the most proper remedy?

We subjoin for the present the following communication on the subject from a dear and respected brother.

Dear brother in the Lord :—

I have been prompted (since the Visiter for Sept. has come to hand) to send you an article on our Y. Meetings, though I would prefer delaying it for the want of time, being very much engaged at present from home as well as at home, & therefore write this in haste.

It was considered necessary by the elders and brethren assembled that there should be an address added to the minutes of this year's annual meeting, for the purpose of cautioning our dearly beloved brethren and sisters from increasing unnecessarily the crowd and burden of our yearly-meetings ;—the clerk was unable to add the same to the minutes for reasons which he mentions at the close of the printed minutes,—there also, expressing a hope that something would appear in the Visiter. I therefore venture to give a few remarks on the subject.

The brotherhood cannot accomplish its ends without meeting in general council-meeting ; the brethren therefore not long after their migration to America resolved to meet annually for this purpose ; hence our Yearly-Meetings.—But at length the Y. meetings became somewhat burdensome, and did not seem to answer so fully the ends for which they were held : The elders and brethren assembled at the annual meeting of 1837, with a view of lessening the crowd and burden, recommended that each organized congregation (except the one in which the Y. M. is held) should only send two Brn. as delegates to our annual-meeting.

This counsel was approved of by many of the brethren ; and it has also been adhered to by some of the congregations so far as the sending of delegates is concerned ; but at the same time that they send two delegates, they permit half a dozen, a dozen or even more other members to go, and this is what has had, and will have a tendency to swell the number of members to such an extent that it will become impossible to hold our Y. meetings with that order, convenience and satisfaction, with which they otherwise might be held.

The plan as recommended by the Y. M. of 1837, might be rendered practicable in case the elders and brethren in their respective congregations would occasionally speak of it, and admonish the members generally, to forbear making their social visits, and their journeying at the time of the Y. M. and to deny themselves to some extent of the privilege of going to the Y. M. with a view and hope of thereby not only lessening the crowd of members and burden attendant upon holding Y. Meetings, but of promoting (more fully,) the general welfare and prosperity of the brotherhood at large ;—and as an inducement for them thus to deny themselves, every member, who might desire to have the report of the proceedings and minutes of the annual-meeting, should be entitled to the privilege of having a copy of the minutes &c. by their paying to the delegates in advance for the same—and it should be the duty of the delegates to ascertain (before going,) how many copies of the minutes of the Y. M. would be wanting in their own respective congregations &c.

It should be remembered by all that our Y. meetings have been chiefly appointed for counsel, but the brethren have considered it a favorable opportunity, to have the doctrines of the Gospel preached and its ordinances practised at the place of Y. M. and as long as the communion &c. was observed in connection with the preaching of the doctrines, there seemed to be more sameness of

sentiment among the different congregations in the observance of feet-washing, and the Lord's supper.—In consequence of the large crowd &c. the elders and brethren not many years since agreed to decline to holding the communion at the place of Y. M. and as a consequence the brethren are becoming more diversified in their views and manner of holding the communion &c.; hence it was proposed at this year's annual meeting to hold a *model lovefeast.*

If the plan recommended by the Y. M. of 1837 were carried into effect, there might still be a communion held at the place of Y. M. and if so, it would tend to bring about a sameness throughout the brotherhood in the observance of the institutions of the Gospel.—And since the object of our Y. Meetings is to hold counsel,—would it not be as well under existing circumstances entirely to dispense with the public preaching of the word at the place of Y. M? This would at once lessen the crowd, and render it possible to hold a communion and counsel with less trouble and expense, and with more satisfaction.

I would recommend this to the consideration of the elders and brethren in our next annual meeting. Dear brother, I have now given my simple views on the subject, as one who feels a desire to contribute a mite toward promoting the welfare and prosperity of the brotherhood at large.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with us all. Amen.

P.—

* * *

ON CREEDS AND DISCIPLINES.

Do we need any other written discipline besides the word of God? I have often heard it asserted, that the brethren need a discipline or confession of faith, or some written form of doctrine besides the Gospel. But I think and believe am able to prove, that the word of God is all we need. First, in that is contained the rule, whereby all men are to be saved, and outside of that we find no assurance for any. And all the rest of scripture is but an exhortation to us, to obey the rules laid down. Then why separate? Why not have the whole together, as all is of use, and great use, and the word of God contains every thing, that is needful for the salvation of the soul, and the government of churches? Then we of course need no more; for the Word is constitution and by-law to all, that will but obey it, and I am of firm opinion, that those creeds and disciplines have been the cause of a great deal of harm; for those that have them, teach their children to study them to the exclusion of the pure Word, and the child grows up to look on the creed or discipline as the only true way, and settles down upon that, whether it be according to the word of God or not. Then there is an evil here, that alone can be remedied by the perusal of the New Testament. But says one, let us make one that will accord with the Word! Well then, let us take the Word. It is the truth and contains the faith of Christ, that was brought to a high state of perfection by him, shedding his blood on Calvary. And if we take this course we will be sure to have the right discipline, and the only one needed for us to have. And let us be more zealous in its perusal, and try to carry out in obedience the precepts contained therein, and we will find, that it will result in our benefit here and hereafter.

CEPHAS.

For the Visiter.

INFANT EDUCATION.

This is a subject of importance, to which the attention of every parent ought to be directed. There is no parental duty more generally trifled with than in the moral training of infants. And even sensible and pious parents too frequently err on this point.

On the mode in which a child is trained during the two or three first years of its existence, will in a great measure depend the comfort of its parents and its own happiness in after-life. The first and most important rule on this subject is—*that an absolute and entire authority over the child should as early as possible be established.* By authority I mean such a mode of conducting ourselves toward our children as will infallibly secure obedience.

This authority is not to be obtained by a rough tone of voice, nor by threatening language; but by an even, firm, moderate disposition of mind; which is always master of itself; which is guided only by reason, and never acts under the mere impulse of fancy or angry passions. We must endeavor to acquire ascendency over the young at a very early period of their lives. Children are susceptible of education much earlier than people generally think. How soon do we see a disposition of stubbornness, obstinacy, anger, and a spirit of independence display themselves, even when the child is sucking its mother's breast? What mean those cries and tears, those threatening gestures of the eyes sparkling with rage in an infant, when resolved to gain his point with all his force? These circumstances clearly point out the period for commencing to subdue the bad inclinations of children. From the age of ten or twelve months, and earlier if possible, every parent ought to commence the establishment of authority over his children; for the longer it is delayed after this period, the more difficult it will be, to bring them under complete control. This authority is to be acquired not by passionately beating children at an early age, but by accustoming them to perceive *that our will must always prevail over theirs,*—and in no instance allowing them to gain an ascendency or to counteract a command when it has once been given.

If you wish to establish authority over a child, select opportunities of the following nature. If a child has any thing in his hands, with which he is delighted, let the parent take it from him; & when he does so, let no consideration whatever make him restore it again at that time. Then at a considerable interval, perhaps a whole day is little enough, let the same thing be repeated. In the mean time it must be observed that no attempt should be made to contradict the child in the intervals.

Not the least appearance of opposition if possible, should be found between the will of the parent and that of the child, except in those chosen cases, when the parent must always prevail. Neither mother, nor nurse should ever presume to condole with the child, or show any signs of displeasure at his being crossed; but on the contrary, give every mark of approbation. This experiment frequently repeated will in a little time so perfectly habituate the child to yield to the parent, whenever he interferes, that he will make no opposition.

Those who have practised the above method, can testify that it is an easy matter to train a child against it is twelve months old, that it would suffer its parents to take anything from them, without the least mark of anger or dis-

satisfaction, while they would not suffer any other person to do so without the bitterest complaints. Such experiments, if managed with judgment and prudence, will produce habits of obedience.

But care should be taken, that the child be not unnecessarily contradicted or irritated. Children trained in this way with firmness and affection, soon become happy in themselves and a comfort to their parents; and those scoldings, contentions and sounds of discord, so frequently heard in the family mansion, entirely prevented.

In order to establish complete authority, adopt the following as a rule, that no command, either by word, look or gesture, should be given, which is not intended to be enforced and obeyed. While some people are almost incessantly giving commands to their children, they are not careful to see that they are punctually obeyed. They think the violation of a command a trivial fault as a matter of course. There is no practice more common than this, and none more ruinous to the authority of parents and to the best interests of children. When a child is accustomed frequently to disobey their parents, a habit of insubordination is induced, which sometimes grows to such an extent, that neither coaxing nor threatening, nor the severest punishment is sufficient to counteract that miserable habit; and a sure foundation is laid for many future sorrows of both parents and children.

The rule therefore should be absolute, that every parental command ought to be enforced. And in order to this it is requisite, that every command be reasonable; that a compliance with it produce no unnecessary pain or trouble to the child;—that it be expressed in words of kindness and affection, *not* in a spirit of passion. Reproof given in a rage and with words of fury, is always considered as the effect of weakness, and if you cannot correct your children without getting angry, you should not punish a child at all. What would you think of a magistrate pronouncing sentence against a criminal, & being at the same time under the influence of angry passion? Would you not consider him a weak magistrate? So in all our actions towards our children we should be calm and collected, yet firm and resolute.

D. L. G.

* * *

WORDS OF THE WISE.

Religion is such a belief in the Bible as maintains a living influence on the heart.

The deepest religious feeling makes the least noise, but its principle and action are steadfast and intense.

Experience proves, that an uninterrupted and extraordinary flow of prosperity is more fatal to generosity or interest in others than any thing else that can befall man here below.

If we would not fall into things unlawful, we must deny ourselves in those that are lawful.

Christians might avoid much trouble and inconvenience if they would only believe what they profess—that God is able to make them happy without anything else.

The best evidence of strength in grace, is to bear much with those who are weak in it.

Where sin lies heavy, crosses lie light; and on the contrary, where crosses lie heavy, sins lie light.

The afflictions of Christians are neither great nor long; for what can be great to him that counts the world nothing, and what can be long to him that counts this life but a span?

For the Gospel-Visiter.

THE ORDINANCE OF FEET-WASHING.

Inasmuch as this important ordinance so much neglected, and often treated ghtly and with contempt, even by ny who are leaders of the so-called ristendom, I shall endeavor by the p of God, in this article to throw ne light on the subject; being aware at the Visiter is read by many who are eglectors of the same: otherwise I would deem it unnecessary, as I presume that no true follower of Christ has any scruple in regard to the essentiality of Feet-washing.

In the 13th chapter of John's Gospel, we find the institution of this ordinance recorded, and in such plain terms that no one can deny it. Yes, all must at once admit, that Christ washed his disciples' feet, in that doleful night in which he was betrayed into the hands of sinners.

But as a corrupted Christendom could not alter that institution or make a substitute as they have done in most every other, they have set it altogether aside. And when the word of God is held forth to them, they screen themselves out by raising frivolous objections against it; which sometimes can be heard declared publicly from the pulpit, as if the Son of God had never commanded nor exemplified it. And by so doing, they deceive thousands of souls that would otherwise come to the true knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I shall then try to answer some of the main objections made by the opponents of feet-washing, and in doing so, I will not only prove, that it is a command of our Saviour, indispensable, and literally to be obeyed; but also that our eternal happiness is connected with the observance of the same. In order to condense this subject as much as possible, I shall in the first place adduce two objections together, and reply in the same manner.

It is alleged that Christ washed his disciples' feet, in imitation of an ancient custom among the Eastern nations, as Abraham, Lot and others had done; and that it was necessary to wash off the filth from their feet, being without shoes, as they wore only sandals, and by traveling on the sandy plains of Judea their feet would get very filthy, &c.

In reply to this I will cite you to one passage from the alluded chapter, which shall be sufficient to confute this argument, and ought to convince every honest soul of its utter groundlessness. Verse 6 & 7. "Then cometh he to Simon Peter, and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." Had it been customary among them, why so strange to Peter? Would he not certainly have known it beforehand what Christ was going to do, when he girded himself, &c.?

Again, we deny its having a resemblance to the Eastern custom. Let the opponents produce one particle of Scripture, where Abraham, Lot, or any others, have washed the feet of them whom they entertained. They certainly can not. No, no; the water was brought to them and they themselves washed their feet. When Jesus reproved Simon the Pharisee, he said, "I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet," showing plainly that that custom prevailed among the Jews, unaltered in our Saviour's time.

And in regard to washing off the filth, we will not suppose Peter to be so ignorant as not to have known it, had that been the case. Ask a child of six

years of age, when its mother washes its feet, and it surely will know it. Why was it, that he would not know it *then*, but was to find it out afterwards? Again, when Peter still refused to have his feet washed, for he thought himself too unworthy, the Saviour said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

Reflect upon this my dear friends who oppose it! No part with Jesus, no interest in his blood, and no claim to his inheritance!—Peter then became so willing, that he wanted also his hands and his head washed. Then Jesus said, "he that is washed (namely in baptism) needeth not save to wash his feet but is clean every whit, and ye are clean but not all. (Excepting Judas who betrayed him.) I would ask now in the name of common sense, why would not Judas have been clean after his feet were washed, as well as the others, if a literal cleansing was intended? It is the cleansing of the soul, which the Saviour had in view by instituting this ordinance. Let this suffice in regard of a customary or only a literal washing; yet we admit it must be literally performed having a spiritual import.

Others will make it entirely spiritual; they do not deny that the Saviour did perform it literally, but they deny it being a command for his followers to be obeyed. They will say, that he has done it in order to show them humility and benevolence, being only figurative, feetwashing being a mean and humble office, would teach them kindness and love, even to minister unto their fellowmen in the very humblest office; for instance, if they would blacken the boots of their brethren, or feel as if they could wash their feet, it would answer the same purpose, &c.

These are presumptuous, vain imaginations, and will never hold good at the final day of accounts, depend upon it, my dear friends. The position some will take in proving feetwashing not positively commanded is the 14th verse, "If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought to wash one another's feet." The word *ought*, say they, is not strictly binding, and is left, as it were, optional. We might do it, or leave it undone, and still not be guilty of a neglect.

To such I would merely say, that they should examine the word *ought* where it stands in connexion with other passages in Scripture, they would soon find to the contrary. The word *ought* used as a verb, is always in the imperative mood, imperfect tense and is expressive of a command, consequently strictly binding. See Matth. xxv. 27. "Thou *oughtest* therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and at my coming I should have received mine own with usury." Here you see farther that in neglect of attending to what he *ought* to have done, verse 30 the unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Here you have an instance of the stress that that little word *ought* bears. In short, *ought* means must, or shall, and is so translated in the German. "Ye shall wash one another's feet." Hear the next verse, "For I have given you an example, that you *should* do, as I have done to you." *Should do*, strong enough my friends, but oh it comes stronger yet, and happiness connected too; "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Of course on the other hand we will be miserable, if we know it and *not* do it.

Another objection is made, because, they say, there is only one place we can read of it, and therefore it is not

obligatory upon all followers of Christ. It is true, they say, Christ washed the twelve apostles' feet but none other. Were this the case, I would still think it sufficient. Where do we find it more than once commanded, that baptism is to be performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? and yet most all professors that perform baptism, do it in those three names. And good authority have they for it, for the Saviour said so to his apostles once, and that all think sufficient in that case, but why not in the other? When equally told to the apostles, 'that they ought to wash one another's feet,' and 'that they should do as he had done to them?"

Recollect, He commanded them to teach all things whatsoever he had commanded them; and glory be to God that we have an instance upon record, which shows that they did do it! Lest some proud and selfish, rebellious critic might say, that they were not faithful to their calling, the apostle Paul, who had received his office from Jesus Christ, according to his own declaration, said to his son Timothy 1 letter v. 10: when speaking of qualifications of widows to be taken into the number, he mentioned among other things, "*If she have washed the saints' feet.*"

Paul also commanded Timothy in his 2 letter ii. 2. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Now Christ has in the first place showed the example, and then commanded the apostles to do the same. Paul, who was not a whit behind the chiefest apostles, instructed Timothy, the necessity of the same in the widow's choice, and also taught him to commit it to faithful men in order that others were also taught; and so the ordinances of the Lord's house were kept up from time to time through all the different dark ages, by faithful men, until, thanks be to God, they came down to us into the nineteenth century, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against them.

I have said that feet-washing is literally to be performed, but like all other ordinances, has a spiritual signification. In the first place it represents that love and humbleness of mind, a Christian should cherish in case of a necessary brotherly reproof. In the next place it signifies a spiritual cleansing, as we can easily defile our natural feet after cleansing, so likewise can we defile our feet of faith, by being too careless in the attendance of our duties towards God & man.

We know the Saviour once said, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak;" hence Peter's denial of his Lord and Saviour, which caused him to weep bitterly, and in consequence he had to acknowledge to the Lord three times, that he loved him. I verily believe that he then became sensible of the necessity of an after-washing. Let us hear the admonition of Paul, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

All the visible ordinances of the Lord's house are literally to be performed by a certain sign, and the essence thereof lies not in the sign, but in the word of God: so we do not believe that the water in feet-washing purifies the soul, but obedience to his divine command. If to the glory of God, and for the love of Jesus, his commands be faithfully obey-

ed, its effects will become spiritual. 'For the words which he has spoken, they then become to us spirit and life."

These ordinances are often called outward ordinances; and to them that obey not from the heart they will be so: but to those who are prompted by the love of God, to forsake sin and follow Jesus in all his requirements, the work is wrought internally. Inasmuch as the heart is the seat of affection, so love proceeds from the heart; consequently, then all the work is internal and there is no external work to be performed, but the inward faith and obedience is only evidenced by external signs.

Without these external tokens, it would be impossible to know the tree by its fruit: for the Saviour said, 'The kingdom of God is within you.' We feel happy in the act of feet-washing, we feel good in all the performances of the Lord's house. Oh my brethren and my sisters! Have you not often felt happy, when seated around the Lord's table, whilst attending to the ordinances of feet-washing, the Lord's supper, the salutation of the kiss, and the communion of the Lord; those humble institutions? I trust this has been often made effectual unto us what the Saviour said, "If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them," happy in time, and forever happy in eternity.

O my fellow-christians! let us then cheerfully go on in the ways of the Lord! Let the ungodly world frown, let the careless professor scoff, the infidel sneer, the nominal Christian ridicule; Let all the merchants of Babylon oppose,—yea all the priests of Antichrist calumniate you, and speak contemptuously of the ordinance, of which Christ most solemnly declared: Unless we observe it, we have no part with him. And if we know it and do it, we shall be happy, and of course fare well in the other world.

ARISTOBULUS.

THE MOST ANCIENT DOCUMENT OF OUR HISTORY.

When we published in June, July & August-No's of the present volume a translation of Eberhard Ludwig Gruber's ground-searching questions to our brethren more than 140 years ago together with their answers, we were not aware of any difference between those various editions, extant of the same. Possessing the last edition of 1822 we followed it implicitly, believing it to be a full, complete copy of the former editions. But we have been informed since the publication of that document, that in the earlier editions there is one question more, which was left out in the last german edition.

Wishing to give this ancient testimony unabridged and in full, we immediately requested our informant, to send us his copy of the older edition, so that we could compare ours with it. In reply we were told of two editions, one if we understood it rightly, of 1774 and one of 1799. both of which contained said question, left out in mine, and that we might obtain the loan of either. Now we would prefer to have them both, and if there should be still a copy of an older, even of the first edition (in Germany in 1713) we should like to have that also for a limited time, in order to collate the different editions together, and thus to be enabled to give our translations from the most authentic sources.

Our attentive correspondent has favored us however with a written copy of the question and answer, wanting in our edition, "which" as he well observed, "you are perhaps anxious to have soon,

and we hasten to lay the same before our readers for the same reason. It is the fortieth and last question which consequently should have followed immediately after the 39th question (see August-No. page 64.) and which reads as follows in the original language.

„40. Frage. Ob sie einen bessern Ausgang ihrer Gemeinde, als die vorige Wiedertäufer erwarten? Und woher doch? Und mit was Versicherung ihrer Seelen vor und von dem unpartheyischen, und alles Hohe und Erhabene, auch in allen sich selbst aufwerfenden und suchenden Secten, auf das tiefste erniedrigenden und zu Grund richtenden Gott?

Antwort. Wann wir in der Lehre des Neuen Testaments bleiben, so erwarten wir einen solchen Ausgang, nämlich: daß das Ende unseres Glaubens seyn wird das ewige Leben, und werden für die kleine Schmach und Leiden eine über alle Maaßen wichtige Herrlichkeit erlangen. Von unsern Nachfolgern können wir noch nicht zeugen. Wie ihr Glaube seyn wird, so wird auch ihr Ausgang seyn. Dennoch aber sagen wir dieses, daß der Ausgang der vorigen Täufer weit besser gerathen als aller andern Religionen, und daß der Täufer-Saame noch weit besser ist, als der Saame L . . . i, C . . . i, und auch der R . . . en. Denn da ist gar ein wilder, ja thierischer Ausgang erfolget gleich wie am Tage ist: daß sich auch Juden und Türken ärgern müssen an der greulichen Gottlosigkeit derer dreien Religionen. Denn sie mit Galgen und Rad nicht genug wehren können, daß die, so eines Glaubens sind, einander nicht in den Häusern todschlagen, welches doch öfters geschiehet. Und, was noch das Greulichste ist, sie ziehen öffentlich in den Krieg, und schlagen einander bei Tausenden todt: und das ist die Frucht der Kindertaufe. Man wird doch keinen Täufer im Kriege finden, auch wenige in Gefängnissen oder am Galgen um ihrer Uebelthat willen. (Hier müssen wir nicht vergessen, daß dieses vor 140 Jahren in Deutschland geschrieben worden. Leider findet man jetzt auch Täufer (Baptisten) die in den Krieg ziehen, sich mit Titeln, wie Captain, Major, Colonel oder General brüsten, und sonst der Welt so gleichförmig geworden sind, daß sie nicht mehr von der Welt unterschieden werden können.) Es sind noch die meisten zum Frieden geneigt. Man kann noch ruhig unter ihnen schlafen, darf sich keines Raubens oder Todschlagens befürchten, wann man viel Geld hätte, und wäre wohl zu wünschen, daß die ganze Welt voll wäre solcher verfallenen Täufer. Auch ist ihr Ausgang noch besser gerathen als vieler unter den Pietisten, die da wieder einen bösen Eingang genommen haben, da sie kaum vor etlichen Jahren angefangen auszugehen von dem großen Babel, sind aber gar bald wieder ungezwungen hinein gegangen. Wo nun ein solcher Eingang geschehen, da wird der Ausgang gar elend und jämmerlich seyn, wovor Gott alle Täufer in Gnaden bewahren wolle, daß sie nur keinen bösen Eingang mehr nehmen, so wird der Ausgang seyn, wie oben gemeldet, nämlich das ewige Freudenleben."

The above is a correct transcript, and by a hasty comparison I could detect no other difference, only the word "Rath" in the answer to the query is no doubt intented for "Rad" (wheel) &c.

Daniel Snowberger.

We venture to give to the english reader as near as possible a literal translation, though paying more attention to the sense, than to the form or words.

"Question 40. Whether they (the Brethren) did expect a better success of their church than the former Anabaptists? And why? And with what assurance of their souls from and before that God, who is impartial, and will destroy and bring down to the lowest

depth all things high and aspiring, even in all s e l f-assuming and s e l f-seeking sects?

Answer. If we abide in the doctrine of the New Testament, we expect such a result, namely, that the end of our faith will be eternal life, and that we shall obtain for the little shame and suffering an exceeding great measure of glory. Of our successors we cannot now testify. As their faith shall be, so will their end be. However we will say this much, that the coming out of the former Baptists has borne far better fruit, than all other religions, and that the seed of the Baptists is better still than the seed of L . . . ism, C . . .-ism and of R . . . ism. For there the result has been most savage, yea beastly, as all may see, that even Jews and Turks must be offended at the horrible wickedness of these three religions. Gallows and the rack*) are not sufficient to prevent those who are of the same faith, from killing each other in their houses, which too often happens. And what is still more horrible, they go publicly to war, and kill each other by thousands, and this is the fruit of Infant-Baptism. No baptist indeed will be found engaged in war, and but few in prisons or on the gallows for crimes committed by them. (Here we must not forget, that this was written more than 140 years ago in Germany. It is to be lamented, that there may now be found Baptists, who go to war, who glory in titles such as Captain, Major, Colonel or General, and who are otherwise so much conformed to the world, that they no longer can be distinguished from the world.) Yet most of them are inclined to peace. A man can sleep securely among them without fear of being robbed or killed, even if he had a great deal of money, and indeed it would be desirable that the whole world were full of such decayed Baptists. Their coming out has also had a far better result, as that of many Pietists, who have made again a bad entry, after having scarcely begun some years back to come out from great Babylon, but very soon returned again of their own accord. Now where such a re-entrance has taken place, there the end will be miserable and wretched, and oh may God preserve in mercy all Baptists from making such a bad re-entrance, and then their end will be, as above stated an eternal life of bliss."

Postscript of the Editor.

We hope our dear readers, who are not of the same faith with us, will par-

*)We have translated the german word "Rad" not literally, which would signify "wheel," and would convey no definite idea to the American reader, as the word *"rack"* will, signifying torture. To make the original term intelligible, we must observe, that the *"wheel"* was used in Germany for the punishment of certain very atrocious murders, in different ways according to the greater or less degree of criminality. In some cases the wheel was horizontally put upon a high post, and the corpse of the criminal, after being brought to his death either by hanging or beheading, laid and left on that wheel exposed to the gaze of the passer-by, as a terror to evil-doers, until time and the birds of prey should destroy the remains, burial being denied to them. In more aggravated cases the wheel was used by the hangman to bring the criminal to his death, by forcibly applying the wheel on the body and limbs of the sufferer, while he lay extented before him. In the very worst case the limbs were broken first by the wheel, and at last the sufferings ended by striking the vital parts, and finally the body was exposed as before mentioned *on* the wheel. But let us turn away from tortures at which humanity weeps!

don us for inserting the above in the Gospel-Visiter, as our main object was and is to give the testimony of our ancient brethren in full, without garbling or abridgement. We admit the severity of the answer given by our brethren, but we beg also to consider the severity of the questions put to them, and believe, that upon considering both questions and answers, the impartial reader will excuse our brethren, whose heart was, as he will perceive, kindly and sincerely disposed toward all men, though their language sounds harsh and severe. Moreover let the reader consider, how severely our loving Saviour rebuked the Pharisees &c. Matt. xxiii. and even his own disciples, when they deserved it, and that the Comforter's office is particularly *to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*, John xvi. 8. May we hence not conclude, that he who flatters the world, excuses or justifies sin &c. cannot be actuated by that Spirit of God, which Christ promised to his children, while he who reproves sin, where-ever found, is only an instrument of that Spirit, who reproves the world. Or has the world improved so much for the better, that it needs reproof no longer?— —

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL. (Concluded.)

And when the foregoing principles are complied with, they will naturally incline the sinner to come to the next principle, which is the doctrine of baptisms, and this principle is one which must also be obeyed; for if we undertake to keep the Law, we must do all the commandments, and if we lack in one, we become guilty of the whole. The doctrine of baptisms,—where shall I begin to write upon this principle? It has been so much talked about, written about, yea, preached about and against from the pulpit and from the press as non-essential, as useless, as nothing, and yet that good preacher Jesus Christ has commanded it, and not only once, and made it a condition of salvation in that much neglected commission by St. Mark xvi. 16. Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost and there made it a condition of salvation, yea for the remission of sin. Paul makes it one of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of Christ. And let us rather believe and obey God than men, and hold fast and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

But what is meant by this plurality of baptisms? Commentators will tell us, it refers to the Jewish washings; but this will not do; for Paul is not talking about Jewish ceremonies; he is now talking about the principles of the *doctrine of Christ*. What then is it? Why we answer boldly and deliberately, it refers to the triune immersion as practised according to the commission by St. Matthew.

I will write a little more about the design and necessity of baptism. We are told John iii. 5. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Well, we all know what being born means. But this text has a twofold testimony. First it requires an immersion to be born of water. Secondly it also bears testimony to the design of baptism. By being born we understand the act of coming into life, springing from a state of nonentity into a state of existence, and when thus born, we will according to all things be something new, or in other words new-born babes. How then do we become as such, as a little child, as a new creature? Now bear this new

creature in mind. We are told, Rom. vi. 3. that we are baptized into Jesus Christ. Mark the word "in" or "into," and read again, for Paul is a noble witness. 2 Cor. v. 17. "Therefore if any man be *in* Christ, he is a *new creature;* old things are passed away; all things are become new." The old man is drowned or crucified, as Paul says, Rom. vi. 6. and the new babe is born. Now I think these evidences are beyond contradiction, for I believe I have produced a "Thus says the Lord" for nearly every thing I have written. Blessed be God, that these things are revealed unto babes!

One more principle and I am done, that is *the doctrine of laying on of hands;* for this I might bring many witnesses but I think I will let the text be all I will use, as it is a very good one. This doctrine I deem as very necessary when the applicant is baptized, the administrator's duty is to lay his hands on the applicant's head, and pray for the remission of sin, the gift of the holy Ghost &c. This prayer of the administrator, the prayer of the applicant, and the prayer of the church united will avail much, will go up through our mighty advocate to God's throne, and there cannot possibly be turned away. Here I hold sins are remitted and I have found no other place since I could read.

I have now given my simple views so far as regards the conversion of the sinner. I would like to write something about his duty afterwards, but will only say with Peter, Add to this faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness charity. 2 Pet. i.

Dear brother excuse this lengthy article.

P. J. B.

For the Visiter.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

From a sister.

To my Father.

Wand'rers in this "vale of tears"
Early we found cause to weep;—
Yet we traveled on in years,
Up the hill side down the steep,—
Weary, worn, we soon shall sleep.

Sleep that sleep, that knows no waking!
Nay, the voice that soothes our pain,
Sweeter than a mother's speaking—
—"Wake up children, rise again,"
Bids us wake and live again."

Hoping, trembling, still confiding,
Wait we for our change to come;
Then with angel's hail his bidding,
Who alone unlocks the tomb,—
Bids them, "Roll away the stone."

O what bliss,—to meet in heaven!
Wait untempted on our God,—
There to wait, and meet on Zion
The great purchase of his blood,
Gathering to the "Word of God."

Lov'd ones we are oft sore wounded
By the "Archers on the wall,"
But that lone blood-mantled bosom
Bears the balm that heals us all,
Poison'd arrows harmless fall!

A few steps;—they'll no more reach us,
Enemies we'll fear no more,
With God's blessing I shall see you
If not here, on thy lov'd shore
O land of light! to part no more.

S.—

* * *

Communicated for the Visiter.

From a brother.

HARVEST-THOUGHTS.

The fields are now white, and the harvest is near,
The reapers now with their sharp sickles appear,

To reap down the harvest and gather in barn,
While wild plants of nature are left for to burn.

Then, oh wretched mortal, look up and espy
The glorious Redeemer descend from the sky,
On chariots of fire, for earth he is bound,
With guards of bright angels attending him round.

Come hither, ye nations, your sentence receive,
No more my good Spirit shall strive and be griev'd;
My judgment is right, and my sentence is just,
Come hither, ye blest, and Depart all ye curs'd!

O sinners take warning and seek ye the Lord!
I have not been jesting, 'tis Jesus' own word,
That those who done good, in his glory shall stand,
And those who done evil, shall surely be damn'd.

So farewell, I leave you to ponder your way,
May God seal instruction to what I now say;
Our souls to his throne let us pour out in pray'r,
That all be prepar'd to meet Christ in the air.

H. M. B.

From a brother.

MIXTURE OF JOY AND TROUBLE.

Mixture of joy and trouble
I daily do pass through;
Sometimes I'm in the valley
A-sinking down in woe.
Sometimes I am exalted,
On eagle's wings I fly;
And then above old Pisgah
I almost reach the sky.

Sometimes I am a-doubting
And think I have no grace;
Sometimes I am a-shouting,
And Bethel is the place.
Sometimes my hope's so little,
I think I'll throw it by;
Sometimes it is sufficient,
If I were called to die.

Sometimes I go a-mourning,
Down Babylon's cold stream;
Sometimes my Lord's redemption
Appears to be my theme.
Sometimes when I am praying,
It almost seems a task;
Sometimes I find a blessing
The greatest I can ask.

Sometimes I am oppressed,
By Pharaoh's cruel hand;
Sometimes I look o'er Jordan
And view the promis'd land.
Sometimes I am in darkness,
Sometimes I am in light;
Sometimes my soul takes wings of faith,
And then I speed my flight.

Sometimes I shun the Christian,
For fear he'll talk to me;
Sometimes he is the neighbor,
I long the most to see.
Sometimes we meet together,
The season's dry and dull;
Sometimes I find a blessing,
With joy it fills my soul.

Sometimes I go to meeting,
And wish myself at home;
Sometimes I meet my Jesus.
And then I'm glad I've come.
Sometimes I read my Bible,

And 'tis a sealed book;
Sometimes I find a blessing,
Where-ever I may look.

Lord! Why I am thus tossed,
And carried to and fro?
Why are my hopes thus crossed,
Where-ever I do go?
Oh Lord! Thou never changest,
It is because I stray;
Lord! grant me thine assistance,
And keep me in thy way!

H. M. B.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

Near eighteen centuries have elapsed since the twelve apostles of the Lamb, suffered persecution for the testimony of Jesus. St. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, that highly favored divine, was banished to the isle of Patmos, as an exile in tribulation,—where the scenes of the inhabited earth were absent from his view; where the noise and tumult of the world could no more startle his ear; where nothing met his vision, but the blue arch of the firmament and the surface of the waters, that surrounded the isle; where nothing fell upon his ear to disturb his holy meditations but the solitary murmur of the Egean sea, as he gazed along its shore.

That dreary spot was well fitted for his ruminating spirit to dwell upon scenes divine; no doubt in his solitude his thoughts reverted to his native land, to the scenes he witnessed when he trod the earth with his Lord and Master. The transfiguration on mount Tabor; the scene of suffering Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, on the slope of mount Olivet, from whence that solemn and earnest prayer ascended heavenwards to the Father of mercies; Mount Calvary, where he had heard the groans of his dying Lord, all were scenes that occupied a prominent place in his memory.

The words of his divine Master had partly been fulfilled, and he was conscious, of the fulfillment of all; the past confirmed, and heightened the hope of the future, into the sacred mysteries of which he was about to be permitted to look.

It was on the Lord's day, and he was in the spirit, when that lonely Isle was visited with beings from heaven, and his solitary musings were interrupted by a great voice as a trumpet behind him, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. And John turned to see the voice, and lo! Seven golden candlesticks, (symbols of the seven churches,) and in the midst of them was one like unto the Son of man, clothed in the attire of heaven, before whose resplendent form the apostle fell as dead. And that heavenly visiter laid his right hand upon him, saying, fear not; I am the first, and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death.

After this followed a succession of revelations and wonders in which John saw in the vista of the future, the state of the church and the world down to the end of time, and saw also way along in eternity the transcendent bliss awaiting the people of God. He saw the heavens open, and behold a throne set in heaven and one sat on it, encircling the throne was a rainbow like unto an emerald; he saw the four and twenty elders, and four beasts round about the throne, and he heard their voices all along in eternity raise on that heavenly atmosphere saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come.

Thus vision after vision passed, until at length in those heavenly climes, he saw the spiritual heights of Paradise. A mount rose before him, bathed in a heavenly atmosphere, and on its summit stood a Lamb, and with him one hundred and forty and four thousand and on their foreheads was a name written in bright and shining characters, 'twas the name of his father. Who are they? who are thus highly favored? They are those who followed Christ in the regeneration. Who died unto sin, and became alive unto God; who trod in the footsteps of their Lord and Master. Who walked in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless. In tribulation and distress they had unshaken confidence in their Lord. And in the end they came off more than conquerors through him that loved them,—obtained the victory over death, hell and the grave.

They had their harps tuned to sing of redemption, and that new song that they sung before the throne and the beasts and elders which no man could learn but the hundred and forty and four thousand, was the song of redeeming love.

M. N. T.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Our Lovefeasts.

During the past months (September and October) no doubt a great many of these meetings took place in our churches through the length and breadth of our land, to some of which we were specially invited, but were only able to attend a very few. Our own, (on the 11th of October) was the last, and we were put in mind of the following beautiful lines, which were communicated to us about a year ago with a rather lengthy notice of one held then. It had come to hand rather late on account of our journey West, and to insert it in December or January-No. we deemed unseasonable, and on account of a little too much praise bestowed upon the persons and labors of the instruments the Lord used at that time for the edification of the church, improper for our columns. But as no such objections exist in regard to the poetry accompanying it, which we have found profitable for ourselves, we give it an insertion now in hope, that the lines may prove profitable to others too. If our lovefeasts have been blessed, soul-refreshing seasons, let us give the glory to God, and let it be seen by our living more soberly, righteously and godly afterwards.

"Another communion is past,
A lovefeast is over and gone,
To some of us perhaps 'tis the last,
Ere the next we may lie in the tomb.
Sweet converse we've held with our Lord,
Our vows we've renewed in his sight,
To obey him and lean on his word,
To love him and serve him aright.

These resolves we've made in his name,
Not trusting our own sinful hearts,
For we're naked, we're blind & we're lame,
But sweet comfort our Saviour imparts.
If we trust him and meekly submit,
To be guided and ruled by his word,
At his table with Jesus we'll sit,
In the glorious Temple of God.

Anonymous.

* * *

Our respected Correspondents, we hope, and have the promise of some of them, will now, since the season for traveling is chiefly over, and they will have more leisure at home, especially in the long winter evenings,) favor us again with more frequent commu-

nications, suitable for our columns. We should always have a number and variety of good articles on hand in order to make a proper selection. Therefore do not wait, till your last article is in print, because that way our stock has been often so low and exhausted, as to be compelled to use inferior articles in order to make up our pages. A number of quite short pieces, to fill up the nooks and corners of the Visiter, (such as brother Theophilus sent us formerly, and we hope will send us again,) will be very acceptable.

* * *

A STRANGE REQUEST.

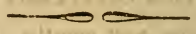
A few days ago we received a letter purporting to be from a brother, though his name is altogether unknown to us, stating that he wants to move to Iowa by Railroad, but that he is not able to pay full fare for himself and family, 14 persons in all, but 6 under 10 years;—that he has been told that we had share in the Railroad, and wants us to send him an order to the Railroad Co. at Pittsburg, to take him out for half price, offering to pay us back the balance with interest. We can only say, whoever told of us having share in the Railroad, was under a mistake, as we never had any such stock or share; but that we think if he represents his case, and takes the second-class or emigrant-cars, he may probably get with his family through for half price. At all events he should have made application in his own church for assistance, and if the church saw need, a further application might have been made in behalf of him by the church. This is the right course, adopted by the brethren. We would freely have given our mite to assist in such a case.

Extract from a brother's letter.

—There is a piece in the August-No. on Regeneration, which, if you will examine, is principally borrowed from Buck's Theological Dictionary. I do not approve of brethren borrowing the views of sectarians, and palming them on the community as their own production, particularly so when a portion of such views are Anti-Gospel, as we might very easily point out, if we were so minded, in the article alluded to.— —

J. A. B.

(An apology is due from us to our respected readers for admitting a few such articles into our columns, while we were almost morally certain, they were borrowed. We have thrown out hints again and again, that if we select and copy something from a book, we should honestly tell it, at least by the word "selected," that we did not claim it as our own composition. But I believe our brethren meant no harm, who put their own name to what had been originally written by another. Perhaps they meant only to sign the letter, in which the communication was enclosed, and it was our fault, to put their initials at the end of their—borrowed—articles. At any rate the reproof contained in the foregoing extract shall and should be heeded by us and all, whom it may concern.



OUR NEW SUBSCRIPTION-LIST

has been, and is slowly increasing, for which we desire to make our grateful acknowledgments. But we have not heard yet of a great many of our old subscribers, and are therefore afraid, that our proposed enlargement of the English Visiter, and publishing the German part separately (16 pages monthly for only 50 cents a year) will have to be postponed indefinitely.

THE MONTHLY GOSPEL-VISITER.

VOL. IV. December 1854. NO. 7.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST.

"*Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*" Matt. xxiv. 29. 30.

"*There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*" Luke xxi. 23–27.

In these two passages the Saviour tells us the precise time of his second coming. By not comparing the two testimonies together, men have made wonderful mistakes in regard to this matter, even imagining that this event came to pass at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. But by comparing both carefully we will have a sure and infallible guide. From Matthew's testimony we learn, that the Saviour's second advent will take place "immediately after the tribulation of those days," and Luke gives us a full account of that tribulation, and how long "those days" will last. The one explains the other. Thus we are informed, that the tribulation of those days will continue as long as Jerusalem is "trodden down of the Gentiles," and as long as the Jews remain scattered amongst the nations of the earth.

All, that are acquainted in the least with the past and present history of the world, know that Jerusalem has been since its destruction, and is now at the present time "trodden down of the Gentiles;" and that the Jews have always been since that period, and are at this time scattered among all nations, and consequently the days of tribulation yet continue. And by the words of the Saviour we are compelled to infer, that as long as the Jews remain scattered among the nations of the earth, and Jerusalem continues to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles, just so long will that tribulation continue; and just as certain as the Jews are now scattered among all nations, and Jerusalem is now trodden under foot by the Gentiles, so certain it is, that this their tribulation shall cease, and that the Jews shall return to their own land, and take possession of their old "beautiful Zion where Judah was glad." Then, and not till then, the Lord will make his glorious appearance, as he has told us himself.

Hence we conclude, that while the Jews remain in a scattered condition, while Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles, we need not look for the end of the tribulation of those days, and consequently not for the coming of the Lord, for remember, it will not take place until "immediately *after* the tribulation of those days." But let us pay close attention to these words of the Saviour. He is speaking of the tribulation of those days in general, and not only of the Jews in particular. He evidently refers to the persecutions, trials, temptations and tribulations of his believing children, of his true followers too. And since this is the case, it might possibly, nay probably be, that the Jews may have taken possession of their own land, and may have permission to build up their Zion again, and yet the tribulation of those days be not at an end.

Indeed by reading Rev. xi. we might be led to think, that even the temple of God would be built already, before the last tribulation should come over the children of God. For there John was told (verse 1.) to "rise and measure the temple of God." To prevent our mistaking this for the spiritual temple of the New Testament, (this spiritualizing of the word of God has done more to darken counsel, to mystify the plain, simple teaching of Christ, and to lead astray into a multitude of sects and parties, than any thing else;) it was added, 'and the altar, *and them that worship therein.*" By thus distinguishing between "the temple" and "them that worship therein," it is made evident, that an 'outward' temple is meant, and not one here, and another there, but that temple of God, which was built and rebuilt, and will be rebuilt again in that place, which God had chosen from of old.

And now let us pay close attention, when we read, (verse 2.) "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." (Verse 3.) "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth." (Verse 4.) "These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."—Here we learn, if we are right in understanding scripture simply as it reads, in its most natural and obvious sense, that after the Jews (and, no doubt, many Christians and Gentiles too,) have gathered in the land of Palestine, after the temple has been built, and worship commenced within its walls, and after the temple and the altar and those that worship therein were measured, and probably have been found wanting, another time of tribulation is at hand, which is to last forty and two months, or a thousand two hundred and three score days, or about three years and a half.

This will be a terrible time. On the one hand the law will be enacted and enforced, that "as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed; and all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, should receive a mark in their right hands or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Rev. xiii. 15–17. On the other hand (by the two witnesses) men will be told, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the

holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Ch. xiv. 9–11. Oh what tribulation will this bring upon mankind! It will be 'the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. iii. 10.

But this is not all. The two witnesses will "have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Rev. xi. 6. Reflect, dear readers, when during last summer we had no rain for only a few months, and it created such distress, as we have experienced, and may yet experience, before the winter is over,—what would be the consequences of a drouth lasting three years and a half, as predicted in this passage?—Can we contemplate it without shuddering?—Reflect again, when in such a drouth the little water remaining should be turned into blood, and the fainting creature, man or beast, would have to die for want of drink, what horrors would ensue?—Add to these finally, that the earth shall be smitten *with all plagues*, famine, pestilence, war &c. and you will have only a faint idea of the dreadful reality of the "tribulation of those days."

However we may be inclined perhaps to think, and say, These calamities, great as they would be, concern only the body, and will be probably calculated, together with the testimony of those two witnesses, to cause a universal revival, and to bring many thousands of souls to the knowledge of the truth. But alas! even this comfort is not left us with regard to this terrible period. Not the least sign is given us of such a blessed effect of the preaching of the two witnesses in the word of prophecy. On the contrary, we are informed, that though the third part of mankind will be destroyed, "the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, *yet repented not* of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; *neither repented they* of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." Rev. ix. 20, 21. This is indeed the most awful circumstance of those days of tribulation, that can be conceived, that during the three years and a half of the living testimony of the two witnesses, accompanied as it is with signs and miracles, seen & felt by all, none will repent, none will be converted, no, not one. Will you, dear unconverted reader, postpone your repentance to that time? ?— God forbid.

And if we ask, Where are the faithful servants and children of God during these twelve hundred and sixty days of tribulation? we must answer, that with the exception of those two witnesses, who boldly represent them and defend their cause before the God of the earth, they are scattered and hidden; "they wander about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy,) they wander in deserts, in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." What their sufferings will be, we can more easily imagine than describe. No doubt they will call those blessed, who have been killed, because they would not worship the image of the beast. "Here (indeed) is the patience of the saints."

Like MOSES before PHARAOH, like ELIJAH before AHAB, *the two witnesses* have stood before *the god of the earth* many, many days, prophesying, and no man could hurt them during that time; but at last, "when they shall have finished their testimony," the tribulation of those days arrives at its climax, the enmity of the *incarnate* god of the earth, of the man of sin, of the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, (methinks, these and other different names designate but one and the same person,) attains its highest pitch in making war against the witnesses of God and of truth, the only two which are apparently left, and "shall overcome them, and kill them."

"And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Here we are informed by the spirit of prophecy, *where* the residence of the "God of the earth," of the last false Messiah and Antichrist shall be; *where* these two witnesses shall prophesy against him, standing in his presence; *where* they shall be killed by him, and their bodies remain unburied in the street of the great city. Remember only what our Saviour says, Luke xiii. 33. "For it cannot be that a prophet perish out of JERUSALEM." True, this was once a holy city, but by being trodden under foot by the Gentiles for so long a time it has become indeed like Sodom and Egypt, because there also our Lord was crucified. There seems to be no possibility of a mistake in regard to this matter, and it becomes an important matter, when we consider, how many thousands of Jews and Christians look toward Jerusalem and the so-called holy land with a longing desire, and would fain make their home there in order to be near at the coming of the Lord and of the Millennium.

Oh that men would read their Bibles more diligently, and pay more serious regard to the word of prophecy! Oh that men would cease seeking and finding mysteries, where God has given us a *revelation*! If that book contains nothing but "*the things which are, and the* things which shall be hereafter," Rev. i. 19. and is intended for the simple children of God, then the most simple interpretation will lead us nearest to truth. Then, oh my brethren and dear readers, let us rather direct our hearts and desires towards the *heavenly Jerusalem*, towards *Jerusalem which is above*, instead of that *earthly* Jerusalem here below, *where also our Lord was crucified*, and where we are told here, that for three years and a half Antichrist will rule there, that the last two witnesses of the Lord shall prophesy there, and exercise their awful power to shut heaven that it rain not there, and to smite the earth with all plagues there, and that they shall finally be killed there!!!

Oh then let us take warning from the infallible word of God. Though there will be tribulation and distress of nations all over the world,—where Antichrist, supported by Gog and Magog, will concentrate his power, it will be worst of all. Though there will be wars and rumors of war every where,—where Antichrist shall make war even against the two witnesses, there will the battle be the hottest. Though, there will be temptations, where-ever we be,—where Antichrist will endeavor to establish HIS *Millennium*, the temptation will be greatest. The very elect will be deceived, if they do not abide in the word of Christ's patience. Therefore be warned, and pardon this digression from our main object, which was

to learn, as nearly as we can from the word of God, the precise time of the second coming of Christ.

"But, says one, what is the use of prying thus into the mysteries of futurity, and trying to find out the precise time of the coming of the Lord, which, as the Lord himself said, "no man knoweth, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only?" Let us watch and pray, and be ready every day for the coming of the Son of man, and then we are safe, let that be when it may!"

Yes, yes, dear brother, if we watch aright, and pray aright, we are safe. But are we not commanded by our Saviour to "search the scriptures?" Have we not the example of the prophets "inquiring and searching diligently, what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify?" 1 Pet. i. 10. 11.

However we must bring these already lengthy remarks to a speedy close. We would recommend to our dear readers to peruse the 11th chapter of Revelation to the end, and also what the apostle Paul says on the subject 1 Thess. iv. 15—17. and 1 Cor. xv. 51. 52. and to compare scripture with scripture carefully, in this as well as in all cases,—and we will try without presumption on our own wisdom, or on the wisdom of any other man, but in humble submission to the word of prophecy, to sum up the result of our present inquiry in a brief

RECAPITULATION.

of what we have learned.

1. From MATTHEW we have learned in the Saviour's own words, that the time of his second coming will be "*immediately after the tribulation of those days.* Matt. xxiv. 29.

2. From LUKE we have learned, that this tribulation is to last as long, as *the Jews remain dispersed "among all nations," and as long as "Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles."* Luke xxi.

3. From JOHN we have learned, that even after the Jews have returned to their own land again, and have rebuilt their temple, there will be another time of tribulation, which is to last *three years and a half.* He says expressly, "the holy city shall they (the Gentiles) tread under foot *forty and two months,*" and informs us that during that same period the two witnesses shall prophesy *a thousand two hundred and three score days.*

Read Rev. xi. the whole chapter, and also 2 Thess. ii. 1—12. 1 Thess. iv. 15—17.

And lastly, from the united import and weight of those and other prophetic testimonies we have learned, that before the coming of the Lord there is to be a great trial, "an hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. iii. 10.—that this trial shall issue "from the holy city, where also our Lord was crucified;" Rev. xi. 2. 8.—that it will be caused by the "god of the earth, taking up his residence there, proclaiming and enforcing, what we read, Rev. xiii. 15—17.—that for the sake of his children God has determined, that this tribulation should last no longer than forty and two months;—that to counteract this temptation God sends his two witnesses, who prophesy 1260 days or the whole time nearly of the tribulation;—and that "*immediately after the tribulation of those days the coming of the Lord shall be.*"

For the comfort of all true believers permit me to add, that they have the glorious promise of the Lord, that he will keep them from the hour of temptation, because they have kept the word of his

patience, and that consequently not one of them will be found in that great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, except the two witnesses, whom God sends there, and excepting those few fickle and unfaithful souls, who are and will be always "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine," and who then will either deny the Lord, or suffer for their temerity of venturing into the den of the beast. Individual members, who venture too far out into the world, lukewarm Laodiceans, who feel rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, and foolish virgins, who want to enlighten others, without making due provision for their own necessities,—such will undoubtedly suffer, but the church will be protected, during that tribulation; to her will be "given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, *into her place*, where she is nourished for a time, (a year) and times (2 years) and half a time, (half a year) from the face of the serpent." Rev. xii. 14. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." I Thess. iv. 18.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

ON EDUCATION.

Knowing the sentiments of the brethren in regard to *Education*, I thought it not amiss, probably, to draw their attention to the subject through the columns of the Visiter: and what few ideas I may advance in vindication of a liberal education, shall be given through the purest motives of unfeigned love for the brethren and for the prosperity of the true church of Christ.—

We live in an age of *progression*, an age in which various systems of internal improvements are originated and completed; political factions arise, flourish, and decline! Wickedness is greatly on the increase, religious sects are springing up, sectarian colleges and high schools are being established throughout the length and breadth of our happy land, and ministers of every sort are crying, Lo, here is Christ, and lo, there.

I cannot but incline to the opinion, that these are the latter days spoken of, and that it behooves us to be on the alert, to watch and pray, have our watchmen upon the walls of the city, and most especially each of us, members in particular of that great body of Christ, to become the sentinel of his own soul, and stand guard of his own frail body, lest he be consumed by the enemy.

I look upon the present as perilous times; while some are crying *peace* and *safety* I fear there is danger. While education is flourishing, deep sought knowledge eagerly acquired, the hidden mysteries of Philosophy revealed, and the road to the temple of fame made easy,—we the simple disciples of Christ, after having on the whole armour of God, that we might be able to withstand the spiritual wickedness in high places, should possess a good degree of philosophical or acquired knowledge or learning, that we might meet a battle with the principalities, the powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, not only resist them, for that is what we should always do, but to overcome them, and this can be done, by meeting them upon their own platform of deep philosophical research, by the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth none.

That our church is based upon the true philosophy of Religion, is not a question of doubt with me for a moment; for I have read and studied the holy Scriptures carefully, and prayerfully,

and I cannot conscientiously construe them in any other light whatever, than that now accepted and practized by the brethren.—I am free to acknowledge that a classical education, is no pre-requisite to Christianity, and natural ignorance or an uncultivated mind, no barrier against free salvation.

But, what I wish to impress upon the minds of our beloved brethren, is, that our church at this day and time, is so deficient in scientific knowledge, as to be unable to present the true principles of our everlasting Gospel, with such force, and in such a manner, as to rivet conviction upon the world, and indicate in a lucid and incontrovertible manner, the simplicity of the plan of salvation. I am by no means in favor of a classical sectarian collegiate education, but I am in favor of a liberal education. I desire to impress upon the minds of the brethren the vast importance of a liberal common school education, and to instill into the minds of our children, a fondness for good books, and the great advantages of learning properly acquired.

I have always looked upon the examples set by learned men, as the result of prejudices instilled from infancy, by sectarians, and not the result consequent upon education. St. Paul was a learned man, fraught to excess with educational prejudices, but after his miraculous conversion, of what vast importance to him was his learning in addition to inspiration? Neither of which advantages the brethren possess generally.

Of how great necessity is it at this present day, that we should be able to elucidate the Scriptures in their primeval simplicity, having Jew and Gentile, Barbarian and Scythian, and many other rebellious people to contend with, deprived, as we are, of inspiration.— It is true the time was, when God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, or in other words, he put language into their mouths, because they knew not his ways nor his covenants. But in these latter times, he has put his laws into our minds, and written them in our hearts, but leaves us to form our own minds or language, for communication.

One of the glorious results of learning, is to be able in a good degree to scan the mysteries of Almighty God, to advance to man's perfection, and to appreciate our utter nothingness, in comparison to the great creative Power; to view with our intellectual eye, the vastness of Creation, the incomprehensible power of the Creator, the goodness of his attributes, the awfulness of Eternity, and what a mere speck our world, with all its greatness, and all its glittering wealth and pride, is, in comparison with the boundless creation.—

The holy Scriptures portray the greatness of the universe, but science reveals it to our minds by its incontrovertible laws. —

More Anon.

For the Gospel-Visiter

RELIGION, MORALITY AND SCIENCE.

Morality has for its design that of making a man a good citizen, honest in all of his dealings with other men, and every moral man must pay strict regard to the rules, whereby society is held together: the moral man can do nothing, that will injure the property or character of any of his fellowmen, & the moral man will refrain from all evil speaking and from all profane and low and obscene language; therefore to be a moral man or woman refrain from all low, vulgar acts, and do to all men as we would wish they should do to us.

Then it is highly important, that we should all try to be moral; for this we must be to be good citizens, and as good citizens it is also our duty, to impress the necessity of the same upon all that are under our care; for this is planting the seed for to bring them to a more elevated and refined position, that man is created to fill. But still morality is not religion, but it is a foundation, whereon we can lay and build up the desire to become religious. And it is also our duty, to teach with morality many of the branches of science; for science has for its motive the expanding of the immortal mind, and directing the same to view the works and laws, whereby the works are governed of the vast creation of God.

And science is also useful to fit a man to be a moral man, and a religious man, (although I believe a man can be moral and religious without science,) but God has given us a mind, that is capable of improvement. Then, I believe, it is the duty of all, to try to improve the mind with valuable information, that does not run counter to morality and religion. All the branches of true science have in them pure morality, and do not run contrary to the word of God; yet there are many who stand opposed to giving their children a good education. For, they say, it will make them proud, and qualifies them to be dishonest persons; therefore, they say, they will not educate. But, mistaken parents or guardians, the fault of those under your care, when they become proud and dishonest, is not the fault of education. But they have not had the proper moral and religious training, while under your care; so that fault rests upon you and them.

A good and well received education is not in the fault. If all were moral & religious, a proper education will make them more careful to do that which is right and honorable with both God and man; and then we should never try to put down the desire to acquire knowledge. For in it lies strength, but there is still more required of man than morality and science. If he stops here, he stops short of duty, and will not be able to stand in the great day of the Lord.

Now Religion has for its design the everlasting salvation of the soul of man from sin and death; and another motive is the glory of God, who is the creator & preserver of all, and man to fill his high destiny must endeavor to fill the design of his creation, that is to work for his own comfort in the future world and bring glory to his Creator, and to do this, he must walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith he is called, and he must have the Spirit of the Most High within him, to testify to his spirit, that he is walking worthy and in accordance with the word of God.

No man can be a christian man, unless he is a moral man, and every man, that does any thing that is immoral, we can safely set him down as no christian. And the use of science is of great benefit to the christian man. By their proper use he can be able to still all the vain boasting of skeptics, and they also help the christian man to vindicate and expound the word of God faithfully. So I think that it would be the duty of all those, that are entrusted with the care of our youth, to impress the necessity of morality, education and religion, as the three should stand connected, and each will assist the person to fill that high station God has designed man to fill, and will make the person happy while on this earth, and fit and prepare him to be happy in those mansions, prepared for all that do their duty here below, and redound to the glory of God. And

happy indeed is the man that attains to that station, which God has designed he should fill.

C. . .

COLLEGES.

To the Editor of the G. V.

The eighth No. of Vol. ii, and the 1st No. of Vol. iii. of the Gospel - Visiter came to hand yesterday, and having just finished reading I am compelled to say, the matter contained therein far exceeded my expectation;—saying nothing of its general typographical neatness, and its adaptation to being bound into a neat volume, forming a book which may be read over often with increased benefit each time. Its usefulness as a church periodical must be great.

The article on church government by "Fraternity" and that on "Christianity" by "Cephas" are particularly interesting, whilst that of "Theoklitus" and others will compare favorably with the writings of persons who make greater pretensions than they.

I am well aware that the number of *your brethren* who will venture to write an article for publication is comparatively small, and I can attribute it to no other cause than a want of sufficient education to engage in the work. Unfortunately the idea, prevailing to a very great extent, that a liberal education is not conducive to the best interests of man, society, and the advancement of Christianity, has prevented many (particularly the elder german brethren,) from acquiring an education themselves, or affording their children the necessary means of a liberal education.

This is a sentiment I cannot fully coincide with. There are many colleges and other schools of learning, which are entirely free from any sectarian prejudices; and I am inclined to think that much of the opposition to colleges by the brethren arises by confounding Theological Seminaries with Colleges and other schools of learning. There is a vast difference between a school or College in which History, Mathematics, Classics and the natural Sciences are taught, and a Theological Seminary under the government of a particular denomination, having Doctors and Professors to teach and interpret the Holy Scriptures according to the tenets of some sectarian Ism.

Any one who is at all familiar with the government and discipline of Colleges and other seminaries of learning, knows that all misconduct and immorality is strictly forbidden, and that those, who have the government of Colleges, pay great attention to the moral culture of students placed under their care.

If we desire a piece of mechanism or merchandise we naturally inquire for it at the place where it is manufactured or kept for sale. In the same manner if we desire an education, we must resort to places where we can have the facilities of acquiring it, and embrace the many opportunities there offered. Some one may say, that "Some of our best educated and most pious persons never attended any College." This is all very true, for I know a few such myself, but the number is comparatively very small, indeed. If they did not attend Colleges, they had other opportunities which they improved, and thereby acquired a good education; but for any one to suppose that an education can be obtained without diligent study, is as absurd as to suppose that an infant placed upon a desert Island, never having any communication with a human being would learn to speak English. The plausibility of one is as great as the other.

Some men have been blessed with superior talent and ability, which enables them to acquire a good education with less labor than those who have only ordinary talent and ability. Of that kind, "Fraternity" "Theoklitus" and others may be. But to suppose or contend that education can be obtained without employing the necessary means and aid of educated instructors, whose business and experience have enabled them to impart knowledge understandingly, because a few men by diligent application, and the occasional assistance of friendly prompters, have acquired a reasonable education, is arguing from particulars to generals—a rule repugnant to reason and experience.

Would it not often be of vast benefit to *teachers* of the holy Scriptures, whose duty it is to expound the word of God, if they possessed a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages—the languages in which the holy Scriptures were originally written? Would it not often assist them, by referring to the original, to understand and interpret obscure and difficult passages; or will they ever be content to suppose that a set of men selected by King James I. were the most enlightened men the world ever produced, or that they were superhuman and consequently infallible in their understanding and translation of the Scriptures. A knowledge of the *dead languages* is regarded by some as next to sinful, because some ill-disposed men have applied such knowledge to evil purposes. That is arguing from effect to causes, whereas all evil should be investigated from causes to effect.

How much stress is placed upon the preposition (EIS) in vindicating the various modes of administering the sacrament of baptism, and how few, how very few indeed of the brethren have sufficient knowledge of the Greek language to examine the matter understandingly, and must consequently be content with the translation given by King James' men, or the interpretation of their contemporaries who are more learned than themselves.

The abuse of a thing is not a sufficient argument to condemn it, and if evil disposed persons make bad use of a collegiate education, it should not be discouraged, any more than the manufacture of matches should be discouraged, because the incendiary employed them in setting fire to his neighbor's house or barn. As well might we complain against God for sending the crystal waters from the rock and filling the rivers, because the *fele-de-se* has used it as an element for his own destruction.

Nor can I see the evil that can possibly result from a careful study of the natural sciences. The astronomer, who soars aloft into the starry region, sees the glory of God manifested more fully in His works than he, who drags out an existence with the mantle of dark ignorance drawn over his mind. Chemistry and natural Philosophy are not a novelty—they are no innovation upon God's work,—they are but the application of principles which existed since the creation, and he who argues against those principles dares—

"To tax creative wisdom,
As if aught were formed in vain."

Now, if there be no possible injury but much benefit to be derived from attending colleges, what argument can be produced against entering them, for the purpose of pursuing a regular course of study, and acquiring a good education?—No one, I trust, will dare to assert, that things which are taught in colleges, are not beneficial to man as a member of society, or as a christian searching after the truth as contained

in the word of God. If there be no other objection to colleges than the discipline, or some other minor matter, I cannot discover the danger persons are under who wish to enter as a student in one of our numerous colleges. There is certainly no more parental discipline than that exercised at a college. The temptations persons are subject to who enter college, are as great out of college as in it. Associates must be selected with prudence and care in every situation of life. If the great objection be the name, it can be answered by a short quotation from Shakspeare,

"What's in a name? that which we
call a rose,
By any other name would smell as
sweet."

I have already extended this letter far beyond what I intended when I commenced, and will close with the hope that the "Gospel Visiter" may find its way into every family in the country.

H. B. W.

(Those three articles on "*Education*," "*Religion, Morality and Science*," and "*Colleges*," have been on hand partly over a year. We spoke of one in our March-No. vol. 3. page 238. (the last one inserted above,) and though we did not then, nor do we now agree with the author and advocate of colleges in general, believing still with our brethren, that colleges are very unsafe places for simple followers of Christ, or their children,—yet, when those two other communications came to hand, after much reflection we were brought to the conclusion, that they ought to have a fair hearing through the columns of the Visiter. This we have done without intending to make any remarks at this time, further than this, that circumstances have come to our knowledge within a year or so, which require us to take the subject of which the foregoing articles treat, into the most serious and prayerful consideration, and we would like to hear the sentiments of other brethren ere long. There are far more of our rising generation (brethren's children) thirsting after a more liberal education, than our common schools afford, and more actually attending academies and colleges, notwithstanding the advice of our Elders to the contrary, than we were, and many of our brethren may be still aware.)

POETRY.

Communicated.

THE PILGRIM'S SONG.

Come all ye mourning pilgrims,
Who feel your need of Christ,
Surrounded with temptations,
And by the world despised,
Attend to what I tell you,
My exercise I'll show,
And then you may inform me,
If it's been so with you.

Long time I lived in darkness,
Nor saw my dang'rous state,
And when I was enlight'ned,
I fear'd it was too late,
A lost and helpless sinner
Myself I plainly saw,
Exposed to God's displeasure,
Condemned by his law.

I thought the brute creation,
Was better off than me,
I spent my days in sorrow,
No pleasure could I see.
Through deep distress and anguish,
My Saviour led me on,
Reveal'd to me his favor,
When all my hopes were gone.

When first I was delivered,
I scarcely could believe,
That e'er so vile a sinner,
A pardon should receive,
And while his solemn praises,
Were flowing from my tongue,
My fears have oft suggested,
That still I might be wrong

And when I see young converts,
How swift they travel on,
How shining their example,
Their witness like the sun;
How bold they speak for Jesus,
How dear they love his name,
Though they are my delight too,
They put my soul to shame.

I often find I'm backward,
To do my Master's will,
Or else I want the glory,
Of what I do fulfill,
In duty I am weak, and
Alas! I often find,
A hard deceitful heart, and
A wretched wand'ring mind.

Sure others do not feel, what
Is often felt by me,
Such trials and temptations,
Perhaps they never see,
For I'm the chief of sinners,
I freely own with Paul,
Or if I am a saint now,
Sure I'm the least of all.

And now I have related,
What trials I have seen,
Perhaps my brethren know, what
Such sore temptations mean,
I've told you of my conflicts,
Believe me, friends, 'tis true,
And now you may inform me,
If it's been so with you.

T. D. L.

* * *

BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT.

Transition of a soul from earth to heaven.

The transition is doubtless instantaneous. It is no tiresome walk down through a lonely, dark valley; it is no weary flight upward, as the eagle mounts, higher and higher; but no sooner is a believer's soul disembodied, than it is in Paradise. The partition once broken down, what shall hinder an immediate view of all beyond? And oh, what a morning is that daybreak of glory! The sun of righteousness shines in all its brightness. It is the effulgence of Christ's person which lights up that whole far-stretching world, and sheds a quickening radiance on every resident there. If two thousand years before Christ's coming on earth, Abraham rejoiced to see his day, what must be the joy of seeing him as he now is, at the right hand of majesty, in the heavens!

Stray beams of his lustre often fall on the dying believer before his soul leaves its tenement. "This is heaven begun," said one; "I have done with darkness forever—forever. Satan is vanquished. Nothing now remains but salvation, with eternal glory — eternal glory." Come to the veranda of a Braminic temple. In the last spasms of Asiatic cholera, Gordon Hall cries, "Glory, glory, glory!" and he

"Passed through Glory's morning gate,
And walked in Paradise."

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth!" Blessed are the dead—not survivors, not the most favored of those who remain here, still sinning and repenting, and so imperfectly serving God—but blessed are the dead in Christ who have ceased from sin, are made perfect in holiness, and have passed into Paradise.—

* * *

THE BIBLE.

Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
Their only point of rest, Eternal Word;
From thee departing, they are tossed, and rove
At random without honor, hope, or peace.

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE.

I have often heard it asserted, that the Old Testament Scripture is of not much account to the Christian. But this, I think, is a great mistake for several reasons:

1. If it were not for this portion of God's word, man would know but little about his existence; for it alone contains a full account of the creation of man and all other parts of this vast rolling planet we inhabit, which declares the handiwork of its great Founder, and it fully declares, that man came pure from the Creator's hands, but afterwards fell from his high estate, and became impure, because he was contaminated with sin. Therefore it was highly needful, that the Deliverer should come, and redeem him from under the curse of the broken law, which Christ did, and fulfilled the broken law, and made it honorable in all its points, and opened up a new and living way, whereby man can be saved.

2. The Old Testament scriptures do declare unto us the love of God to those that obey him, and how very interesting and edifying to read of the kind and fatherly care he exercised unto them that loved him. For he made them prosperous in their outgoing and in-coming, and there we can see too the awfulness of his punishment unto those that forsook his ways, and in truth it contains a beautiful account in full of his love, mercy and justice.

3. The worship of the Jews and all their rites are also typical of the New Testament doctrine, and are worthy of careful investigation. And in all things the old Testament scriptures substantiate the New Testament scripture and is one of the strongest things, that can be brought to bear against modern infidelity; for they must first put down the old, before they can attack the new.

4. If it were not for this part, much ancient history would be lost, and the historian would be left in the dark.

5. It contains predictions, that are yet future, but which will come to pass. But in searching after unfulfilled prophecy, we should do so with caution, for fear that we go astray; for man's ways are not God's ways. Then, dear reader, read all in connection; for all is of great utility to man, and wherever you find any thing required of you, do not fail to do it, and all will be well with you, when time with you is no more.

CEPHAS.

Communicated by a sister.

A CHANGE.

A noble youth once graced the hall of his paternal mansion. View him now, as he is about to leave his home for the first time. He is in all the freshness & vigor of spring-time; sixteen summers have just passed over his head. His heart already palpitates with the rapturous glow of pleasure. Care has not stamped its wrinkles on his brow; misfortune has not dimmed the lustre of his eyes, nor sorrow thrown its gloom over his countenance. The present sums up all his joys, the future is an unthought-of, uncared-for thing. The day he passes in innocent and cheerful amusements, and when night comes on, he lies down to rest and sweetly dreams of happiness and the morrow.

Look again. A person in the morning of life is walking in classic bowers; his high and prominent forehead indicates intellectual greatness. His countenance however betokens a mind ill at ease. Anxiety is depicted thereon. The dreaded ordeal is soon to be passed; he

has completed a full course of study, and expects soon to be crowned with the highest collegiate honors. But observe that flush on his cheeks, that suffusion of his eyes. What means all this? says one. O it is only the effect of an unnatural stimulus! He has been persuaded to take a glass or two of ardent spirits in order to inspire him with confidence, give him courage to go before his professors, and pass a good examination. He has listened to the song of the syren, and he is just ready to go forward to the trying scene.

Look once more. See that man holding intercourse with the master-spirits of the times. He shines as a star in the bright firmament of intellect; he is now immersed in the active pursuits of an honorable profession. He has already mounted the hill of fame, and heard the shout of applause. He holds an audience in breathless attention as the rich strains of eloquence issue from his lips. A young and lovely wife smiles upon him, and prompts him to perseverance; perhaps a blooming cherub boy receives the caresses of his leisure hours.

But observe him closer. An unusual blush lights up his otherwise pale and sallow cheeks; an unwonted fire flashes from his dark and languid eyes. Is there any thing mysterious about this? Dear reader, O no; not at all;—it is only the excitement of an occasional glass. He flatters himself, that a little does him good; makes him feel better; makes his heart lighter, and his spirits more buoyant. For great occasions he wants some excitement.

Finally witness that individual writhing in all the agonies of death; his demoniac expression; his wild glaring and bloodshot eyes; his ghastly features; his maniacal cries, and his violent struggles to escape from his tormenting imaginary fiends. Weeping friends and relatives are standing around his bed; the physician is endeavoring to subdue the furious paroxysm. Is this death? Can this be death? Ah yes, in its most horrid and terrified form. Language is inadequate to the task of painting the untold agonies of such a death; it is the exit of the drunkard; the closing scene brings the bright visions of *delirium tremens*.

Reader, this is no fiction; no, it is so with thousands; yes thousands are going the broad road to ruin in this very way. Many a one, who bade fair to become one of the first in intellectual strength and greatness, has in an unguarded hour yielded to the tempter; he listened to the syren song of "*No danger*;" he drank, and drank, and drank again, and still he cried for more. Thus you may follow step by step every drunkard. Will not then the moderate drinker pause a moment and reflect on this? Will he refuse to heed the admonitions of sad experience? Will he not listen to the warning voice of "Touch not, taste not, handle not? Will he refuse to call to mind the fate of some beloved friend, the end of perchance a kindred spirit? Will all the sad mementoes of the past be hushed to quiet in your breast? We trust not. Then do not ask the cause of all these changes. It is comprised in one word—one fatal word, INTEMPERANCE. Yes intemperance hath done this much!

L. D.

PEACE.

How beautiful is peace at the home-hearth, in society, in the nation, all over the earth! Obliteratory of feuds—washer out of blood stains, and uniter

of earth's races in loving brotherhood. Six thousand years, since Cain smote his brother at the altar, the earth hath travailed with war and in blood. The only land-marks spared by the ages, have been trophies of ferocious conquest. Ruin and terror have swept over hills and valleys and seas, and humanity, born with such a noble and glorious visage, has walked a perturbed and terrible spirit in this earth, garden and paradise of God. Peace, which should have been the companion of man, and the inspirer of joy, has only flashed at brief and wide intervals through the cloud and storm of earth's life.

But it will not be ever so. The war of humanity with itself, its suicidal strife, estrangement from its original nature and from God cannot always last. Eighteen hundred years ago one came upon the earth heralded by angels, who sang, "*Peace on earth, and good will to all men.*" And the prophecy of that song will come to pass. The unnatural war among men, societies and nations must cease. Slowly and certainly the cloud and tempest will roll back, unveiling the clear and serene sky, and humanity, self-bound like Prometheus to the rock, will shake off the vulture which tortures it to agony. Peace will come to all the earth; for God has sent a token, and given promises of it. Then shall the dove fly out from the human ark over the wide sea of earth's ruin plucking the olive leaf, and the bow of promise shall be hung in the heavens, that the water of war's desolation shall no more cover the earth.

Oh haste the time, thou prince of peace!
When war no more shall lift the shield,
But wrath, and strife, and lust of spoil,
To thee their sanguine trophies yield.

Repress the horrid waste of life,
Destroy the warrior's trade in blood,
And say to all the tribes of earth,
Be still and know, that I am God.

Lord Jesus speed the promis'd day,
When love shall hold unbounded reign,
And union sheathe the flaming sword,
That hangs o'er desolation's plain.

Ah! come ye happy moments, come!
When the whole earth shall own the Lord;
And thou the prince, the king of peace,
In peace forever be ador'd.

L. D.

* * *

POETRY.

Communicated for the Visiter.

ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

Death loves a shining mark, 'tis said,
To this our hearts attest;
Whene'er we see our children laid
To crumble with the dust.

Our infants dear are torn away
By death's relentless power;
We see their bodies turn to clay
Within one solemn hour.

And from their bier a voice proceeds,
Prepare to meet thy God!
A sinful course to torment leads,
To Satan's dark abode.

Yet we by faith should look beyond
The limits of the grave,
For heaven is our spirit's home
With Christ who died to save.

He says in gentle loving tones,
Let children come to me!
Forbid them not, for of such ones
Shall heav'n composed be.

Our human nature yields them up
With sighs and groans and tears;
We drink indeed a bitter cup,
Yet should be mixed with praise.

Our precious babes we should resign
To Jesus' kind embrace,

Submit unto his will divine,
Lest he should hide his face.

With one of old, the words the same,
The Lord to us has given,
And, blessed be his holy name,
Has taken back to heaven.

So let us stay these falling tears,
If they're secure from ill;
Strive to subdue our rising fears,
And sink into God's will.—

Rely on Jesus' precious word,
Obey each strict command,
That we may claim him as our Lord,
And dwell at his right hand.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

L. . . T. . .

* * *

Selected for the Gospel-Visiter.

THE SAVIOUR'S PRAYER.

"He went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come he was there alone." Matth. xiv. 23.

"Not in the cloister's dungeon walls,
Nor in the stately fane,
Where the tinted light of sunset falls,
In rainbows through the pane;
But where light streams and heaven's pure eyes
Met on the mountain gray,
Whose head was pillowed in the skies,
The Saviour knelt to pray.

When morning flung the light of hope
Far o'er the hurrying throng,
The incense of his soul went up
With morning's smile and song;
But when pale evening round his heart
Had drawn her dim array,
The Saviour sought a place apart,
The Saviour knelt to pray.

'Twas not for life or death—the case
That life or death could bring;
For more of human happiness
Or less of suffering;
But for unshrinking heart to bear
All that might crush the clay,
The long distress, the last despair,
The Saviour knelt to pray.

The wings of angels gathered it,
To waft the prayer to God,
And angel eyes to diamonds lit,
The dewdrops on the sod,
And seraphs hushed their hymns to hear,
And silence wrapped the throne,
When angel pinions shed that prayer,
"Father, thy will be done."

No wonder that the earth is bright,
And pure the sky above,
Which opened on the brow of light,
Lived in that heart of love;
'Tis all an altar, every spot,
Is hallowed to thy knee,
Whoe'er thou art whate'er thy lot,
The Saviour prayed for thee.

L. T.

THE YEAR 1854.

— —The present aspect of the world in a physical and moral, political and religious point of view is truly alarming to every reflecting mind. That there has been dearth and famine here and there;— that there is wickedness and immorality increasing all over the world; that there is war in CHINA already a number of years, and war in EUROPE and ASIA between the most powerful nations of the earth;—that there is a fearful and growing irreligiosity and infidelity everywhere raising its head,—who can deny it?

But let us confine ourselves to a contemplation of our own country. No nation on the earth has been so highly favored as these United States. While

other nations groaned under the yoke of tyranny and oppression, ours has enjoyed freedom and liberty. While others suffered from want of the necessaries of life, we had abundance. While others were deprived of the means of light and knowledge, and were sitting in darkness, we enjoyed the privilege of Gospel-light and religious freedom. Yet even with us the aspect is changed,—awfully changed.

Instead of our former abundance, there is a scarcity never experienced before in this country to such an extent. Crops of every description have either entirely failed, or are greatly deficient in many parts of our country this year. Long-continued drouth, and the burning rays of the sun during the greater part of the summer, have dried up and scorched the earth so that almost all signs of vegetation disappeared for a time. Not only the grass, not only potatoes and garden-things, but even trees began to wither away. Flour has risen to ten dollars a barrel, and wheat to two dollars a bushel. But many farmers have not raised a sufficiency of wheat for seed and bread for their own families. Cattle, for which twenty dollars a head might have been got in the spring, is now sold at three dollars a head, for want of fodder, hay being in our countrytowns $20 per tun.

Pestilence, moreover, is rapidly carrying off our people by the hundred and thousand. Direct your attention to the ravages of the Yellow-Fever in New-Orleans, Savannah and Charleston; and of the Asiatic Cholera in Newyork, Philadelphia and Pittsburg. In the latter city, which is comparatively small, the Cholera has carried off no less than One thousand in a very short time. Papers stated from 50 to 60 daily, and private letters spoke of 100 to 150 daily. But even in the country disease and death made fearful ravages. Typhoid-and other fevers, the Flux &c. carried off many.

For years, Ocean-steam-navigation has been in successful operation. The voyages between the old and new world, which formerly had required weeks and months, were accomplished of late by steam in 9–12 days, and without any serious accident. "But the present year," as the papers inform us, "has been one of unusual suffering to those who go down to the sea in ships. According to the Register at Lloyds, forty-eight vessels have been given up as lost since the first of January,—as no tidings have been heard from them. A large number of these were passenger-vessels between Europe and the United States." Of steamships alone there were lost the "SAN FRANCISCO from Newyork for California; CITY OF GLASGOW from Liverpool for Philadelphia; HUMBOLDT and FRANKLIN from Havre for Newyork; CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, from Liverpool for Philadelphia; and the ARCTIC from Liverpool to Newyork with a loss of life of probably one thousand persons, who perished with a sudden and swift destruction.

Since we are thus visited with sickness and distress and disasters, what, let us ask, is the MORAL condition of our people?— Is there less profane swearing, less sabbath-breaking, less intemperance; yea less rioting and drunkenness, less chambering and wantonness, less strife and envying? Is there less pride and vain-glory, less dishonesty & unrighteousness, less stealing and extortioning? Is there less covetousness, less immoderate love of Mammon, less uncharitableness and oppression? Who would suppose that, with our boasted love of freedom, a man could be found throughout the length and breadth of our

land, unwilling to grant to others the invaluable rights & privileges, of which he is himself the proud possessor?—Yet, alas! there are thousands, and tens of thousands in the daily commission of these sins, unrepenting, unthinking, and reckless of their responsibility, and the fearful consequences of their perversity.

What is the political condition of our land?— I am no politician; though I was entitled to vote for more than 30 years, I have availed myself but *once* of the privilege, and never since. Hence I may speak freely a word or two on the subject. *Honesty is the best policy.* This is true of an individual, of a family, or of a state. But where is the honesty, when our *practise* is in direct opposition to our *professions?*— Where is the honesty, when we by extravagance run ourselves into debt far beyond our present means to pay them?—Where is the honesty, when our free elections become subject to *secret* societies, of whose aims, principles &c. we know no more, but what they think proper to divulge? Alas, eighty years ago it was solemnly declared, that *"all men of right ought to be free,"* and yet SLAVERY exists among us, and this year we have learned, that it is to be extended without any limit, whenever 60,000 squatters or only a majority of them, agree to introduce it!— Does this look like a gradual extinction of an evil, which so often has threatened to destroy our Union?——

Again—if we are correctly informed, our country is indebted to other countries to such a vast amount, that all the California-gold would not suffice to pay those debts. Nay, such is the extravagance, that there are still new debts, new loans contemplated and incurred. This cannot lead to a good result, and we see already tokens of approaching evil, property sold even in Newyork city for less than half price, what it would have brought in the spring, Banks failing, &c. &c. If we are not entirely mistaken in the present aspect of things, there are *hard times* coming upon us, and the motto of every prudent man, and more still of every christian should be, *"Beware of debts!"*

And again, sixty years ago *secret political societies* in France have brought upon that country a reign of terror, when wholesale murder was the order of the day. When they first were originated, perhaps not one of those, who called them into existence, had the least idea of the bloody monsters, which they afterwards proved to be. Alas, that the leaders of our people do not take warning from the fearful records of past history. But we will say no more on political affairs, except by way of caution to our dearly beloved brethren and all God-fearing friends, to have more to do with *praying* for our country, for our rulers and government &c., and less with electioneering or any political affairs, and above all to *"beware of secret societies."*

Lastly let us inquire, *what is the religious condition of our land?*—My dear friends, if we look in a superficial manner upon the state of religion in this our country, there is much to encourage us, much to be thankful for, yes much to boast of.

There is *religious liberty* in our land, such as no other land in the world can boast of. There is no human creed established by law, to which one must subscribe, if he would enjoy a place of honor and trust in the political government. There is no established church, which must be supported by all, whether they believe it to be a true church of Christ or not. There is liberty for all and each to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, whether that

conscience is formed by the holy influence of the Word and Spirit of God, or otherwise. This liberty, brethren & friends, is almost too great for poor, sinful men to use rightly, as we see in the case of the *Mormons*, and others, who, like the fanaticks of old at MUNSTER in Germany, endeavor to establish a *kingdom of the flesh;* yet we have cause to rejoice and thank God for it, as the humble followers of Jesus, who try to render to God a reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1. are permitted to do so unhindered and unmolested.

Again—if we would judge religion by the number of religious societies, churches or meeting-houses, and other religious institutions, there is no country so religious as ours. There is no village almost, however small, where there are not some 2, 3, or more of buildings for worship, and in cities they must be counted by scores or even hundreds. Besides there are other religious societies and institutions, Sabbath-schools, Bible-societies, Missionary-societies, & Tract-societies, Theological-seminaries, &c. &c. without number. And last—not least, there are religious presses, and religious papers, which find their way almost into every house and cabin of our land. Truly, we are almost too religious. Acts xvii. 22.

But let us not be satisfied with a superficial look at the present state of religion, inasmuch as we know, that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands," and that though "man looketh on the outward appearance, the Lord looketh *on the heart.*" 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Now though we are but men, and cannot look quite so deep as the Lord, with regard to others; yet when we have been enabled by grace divine to look into our own hearts, and see how desperately wicked that heart is by nature, we may look a little deeper, than the outward appearance of others.

The wise man *Solomon* already defined religion to be "to fear God, and keep his commandments." Now we will not deny, but rather freely grant and admit, that there are God-fearing men and women in almost every sect or society in our land, who mean well, and try to do well, or "to live soberly, righteously & godly in this present world." But if we were to ask any pious, honest minister, how many truly pious souls he could count among his flock, even according to his own (sectarian) standard? the answer would probably be in many cases: *Only a few, a small fraction of the whole membership.* And if we interrogate him farther, Why is it, that you admit and retain in membership those who do not live in the fear of God, but openly violate the commandments of God by drunkenness, profane swearing, dishonest dealing, and other works of darkness. Why do you administer to them the mysteries of the house of God, or sacraments, as you call them? Why not reject them at once, and tell them honestly the truth about their real condition?—the poor minister replies perhaps: Alas, if we were to disown all the unworthy members, the few remaining could not support me sufficiently, and I would fall into disgrace with my ministering brethren for acting so imprudently and contrary to our discipline and practice."

What will the piety of such ministers and people amount to, if weighed by the standard-weight of the sanctuary,—the word of God?—*Do they really fear* GOD *and keep* HIS *commandments?* Or do they fear *man*, and keep the *commandments of men?* We leave the God-fearing reader to answer these questions.

Again, it is admitted on all hands, by the better class of professors among all

denominations, that sectarianism is an abominable evil; that every sect has received together with a certain amount of divine truth a greater or less amount of error, and that by binding men to human creeds and confessions, instead to the word of God, error is perpetuated, love is destroyed, and an amount of money and labor wasted in sectarian establishments, which would suffice to bring the Gospel to the door of every family on the earth, and convert the world. Last spring I was at a certain place in the West, and spent the Lord's day there. Wishing to become acquainted with the state of religion, I spent part of Saturday, to make enquiries, and lo, and behold, within the space of half a mile square I found no less than 12 or 13 meetinghouses, built by a population of about 1000 souls or 200 families, all of one language, all so-called Protestants, and most of the houses large enough to contain the whole population. Thus sectarianism builds 12 meetinghouses, and maintains 12 preachers, while one minister and one meetinghouse might answer for the edification of all, and the rest might be applied for the benefit of the poor heathen. Alas, is it not to be feared that meetinghouses are often built, and the Gospel preached with no better motive, than what Nebuchadnezzar expressed, when he said, "Is not this great (or little) Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power (of the lungs or of the purse,) and for the honor of my majesty?" Dan. iv. 30.

To sum up the whole matter about the present condition of religion in our country, permit me to say, that while we have all possible charity with individual short-comings either in the knowledge or practice of religion, we cannot but lament deeply, that it seems to be the determination of sectarian leaders to perpetuate and propagate their errors & antichristian practices, notwithstanding all the light, faith, love and hope, and all the severe chastisements of the year 1854.

Brethren, may we beware of this spirit, and keep our eyes and hearts open to the better light!!

PLAIN DEALER.

For the Gospel-Visiter.

LOOK TO CHRIST, AND BE SAVED.

It is Immanuel, our incarnate God, that invites and commands us to look to him and be saved. It is his voice, which spoke this goodly universe into being out of its original nothing; which said, "Let there be light and there was light;" and dare we disobey his voice by whom all things were created? Col. i. 16. He spoke us into being, and we obeyed, and shall we, when blessed with existence, resist his almighty call? It is his voice, whom angels obey; Gabriel and all his flaming ministers fly at the first hint of his sovereign pleasure. Universal nature hears his awful mandate, and all her laws are observed or cancelled according to his pleasure.

And is this the majestic voice, which sinners hear sounding in the Gospel, and yet disregard? Is this he whom they make so light of, as not to vouchsafe him a look? Amazing presumption! It is his voice which shall pronounce the final sentence upon the assembled universe. He now sits exalted upon a throne of grace, scattering blessings among his subjects, and inviting a dying world to look to him and live; but ere long he will put on majesty and terror, and ascend the throne of judgment.

From thence he will speak, and omnipotence will attend his word to exe-

cute it. From thence he will pronounce, "Come, ye blessed!" on all that hear his call now, and neither earth nor hell can repeal the joyful sentence. And on those, that will not now look to him, he will pronounce, "Depart from me!" Away, away from my blissful presence, ye cursed creatures; never, never to see me more; and though they can now resist the voice of mercy, yet then they must obey the dreadful order of justice, and shrink confounded from his face, and sink to hell.

Ah yes, we must all mingle in that vast assembly, and hear our doom from his lips. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and how shall we stand the terror of his face, if we now treat him so contemptuously? He often looked up to heaven with strong cryings and tears in the days of his flesh for us. For us he spoke many a gracious word still upon record; for us he wrought many a miracle; for us he traveled many a fatiguing journey, and endured hunger and thirst and all the calamities of poverty; for us he was reproached, belied, persecuted, and O for us he sweat and groaned in Gethsemane; for us his back was furrowed with scourging, his face defiled with spitting, his head bruised with buffetings, and pierced with thorns. Then O sinner harden not your heart, but turn in with the overtures of salvation; for remember—

When the harvest is past, and the summer is gone,
And sermons and pray'r shall be o'er;
When the sun ceases to beam on the sweet sabbath's morn,
And Jesus invites thee no more.

When the rich gales of mercy no longer shall blow,
The Gospel no message declare,
Sinner, how canst thou bear the deep wailings of woe?
How suffer the night of despair?

L. D.

* * *

CORRESPONDENCE.

OBITUARY.

DIED in Defiance co. O. (Poplar Ridge church) Sister CATHARINE HARNISH, wife of br. JOHN HARNISH, August 31st last, aged 59 years, 3 months and 12 days, and was buried next day. Funeral-text Heb. ix. 27. 28.

"Why do we mourn for dying friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends,
To call them to his arms."

J. & N. A.

(This notice was overlooked for some time; please excuse.)

DIED October 5th last in Miami county Ohio, brother JOSEPH GARBER, one of the oldest bishops in our Western country, and the youngest of Five brothers, who had all been eminent Ministers of the Word, and whose names were far & wide known throughout the churches. Martin Garber, Samuel Garber, Daniel Garber, Abraham Garber, and Joseph Garber, have successively left the church militant here below, where they all stood in the foremost rank, and have gone the way of all the earth. We hope to meet them all in the church triumphant above. The age of the subject of our present notice was 81 years 1 month and 25 days. His funeral-discourse was delivered by br. Peter Nead and John Frantz from Psalm lxxiii. 24. "*Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*" Communicated for the Visiter by

J. J. K.

DIED in Berlin church, Somerset county, Penns. brother PETER COBER in the 79th year of his age. He has been an able minister in our church for the last forty years and one of our bishops for about twenty years. We suffered great loss in his removal; yet we trust our loss is his gain. He died on the 20th of October, and was buried on the 22d in the presence of a great concourse of people, who had assembled from far and near for that purpose. He left behind him his afflicted widow, a dearly beloved sister, 12 children, 42 grand-children, and 12 great-grand-children. His funeral-sermon was preached by the brethren from Rev. xiv. 13. (Communicated by

J. B.

DIED at her residence near Covington in Darke co. O. on the 18th of October last sister MARY MOHLER, widow of JACOB MOHLER deceased, formerly of Juniata co. Pa. aged 72 years 5 months and 14 days. Funeral-text 1 Thess. iv. 13. 14. and Psalm lxxiii. 24. Time and space forbid a more lengthy notice.

Another, and another's gone
Of those my heart did love;
Grant, Lord, that I meet ev'ry one
In Paradise above!

CONCLUSION OF THE PRESENT VOLUME.

The commencement of a volume in the middle of the year has many inconveniences, which we have felt for some time past. To obviate them, we had contemplated in view of a proposed journey to Europe, to stop the issue of the Visiter to next Newyear, and though it was directed otherwise by a kind Providence, and the Visiter was continued regularly according to the wish of its friends and patrons, we deem it best, now to conclude the present volume, and begin with the New year a new volume. A goodly number of our subscribers commenced their subscriptions with the commencement of the year, and we would desire all to do so hereafter. Those who have paid for a full volume, and have yet 5 No's due to them, will receive the next volume also, if they will pay us *Fifty Cents* more between this and the first of April next. Thus they will receive one No. more than their due, of which we make them a present in order to have all subscriptions begin with Newyear.

As to the present volume, which will be rather small in comparison with the former, (only 168 pages,) by adding vol. 2 of the German part, (about 112 pages) it will still contain something like 280 pages, or quite as much as the former. As to its contents we hope and have been assured by others, that they are not inferior to those of the former volumes; that the Gospel-Visiter is increasing not only in favor, but also in interesting and useful articles. Those "on the prophecies" we recommend to the special notice and candid examination of our dear readers, as containing practical hints for present and future use. The nearer we come to the closing scene of the Gospel-Dispensation here on earth, the more necessary it is to have consistent, scriptural views of the prophecies. The glory of God, the justification of His word, and the salvation of souls is the prayerful aim of the writer as well as the editor.

As to the future we would promise nothing but a constant endeavor with the assisting grace of God to faithfully discharge our duties as a Watchman on the walls of Zion. And that we may obtain that grace daily, as we need it, we desire the prayers and interceding of

all our dear readers, yea of all the household of faith.

* * *

PROSPECTUS OF VOLUME V.

THE GOSPEL-VISITER, edited and published by HENRY KURTZ near POLAND, O. will be continued, God willing, for another year. Though he cannot boast of any extra-ordinary success, he has outlived the difficulties, he had to contend with in the beginning, and is now permitted to pursue his course in peace, by the blessing of God. His aim and object is still the same, as expressed in the first No. of the first volume, "*the exhibition and defence of the pure and unadulterated Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the power of God unto salvation, in the simplicity with which it was taught and practized by the apostles and the primitive church,*" for the instruction of the young and unexperienced, for the correction of false and erroneous views, for establishing the wavering, and cautioning the heedless, and for the edification of all, so that we may more fully realize our Gospel-privileges, or as our title-page says, in order "*to promote christian union, brotherly love and universal charity.*"

What others think of the Visiter, who have read it from the commencement, the following extract shows, which we select from a multitude of similar letters.

"I still receive the Visiter regularly and it sometimes seems long till he comes, but he always comes at the time appointed, like the faithful minister, bearing on his tongue words of peace: I should often contribute something for his columns; but I see he is well supplied with messages, perhaps more than he can bring each month, and from abler advocates than myself, I have no fault at all, to find with him from the first & will support him, while he continues to preach the word of life."

The work will contain from 24—32 pages each monthly Number, or nearly Fourhundred pages a year, printed on good paper, with fair type, and put up in the best style of the periodical press.

TERMS. *One Dollar* the single copy for one year, *five Dollars* for 6 copies, and *twenty Dollars* for 25 copies invariably IN ADVANCE. ☞We would hereby request all our dear subscribers, who know themselves to be in arrears, to remember, that the prosperity of the Visiter depends upon the punctuality of its friends, and we also would solicit all our brethren in the ministry to act and continue to act as our agents.

Our respected friends and readers will perceive, that we still contemplate to enlarge the english Visiter, though the present subscription does not warrant it yet. However we hope, that by the friends speaking a good word for us, we will be sustained in the measure, and the more so, as the price will be the same as heretofore. Thus we try and have tried always to do a little better than our original conditions required, and shall still continue to do so.

We must also say this much for many of our subscribers, that they have not only done well, but better than our conditions required, and we freely acknowledge their kindness, and pray that the Lord would prosper them in temporal and spiritual blessings for the timely support and encouragement of the Visiter. When a subscriber pays in advance about two months before the commencement of the year, he it is that really encourages the publication. Then the Printer has time to make his arrangements properly, without uncertainty and risk.

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Der Evangelische Besuch.

Zwei Jahrgänge dieser deutschen Blätter haben wir als Beilage zum englischen "Gospel-Visiter" unentgeltlich, frei und umsonst ausgehen lassen, aus reiner Liebe zu unserer deutschen Muttersprache, und zu unsern deutschen Brüdern und Landsleuten. Allein schon seit 6 Monaten erhielten wir Briefe auf Briefe, aus denen wir schließen mußten, daß viele unserer Leser kein Gefallen hätten am Deutschen, und daß sie lieber so viel mehr im Englischen wünschten. Auf der andern Seite war uns wohl bekannt, daß Manche unserer lieben deutschen Brüder und Leser wenig Nutzen von dem Englischen hatten, und doch den "Gospel-Visiter" unterstützten um ihrer Kinder und der guten Sache willen.

Dieser Umstand machte uns fast rathlos. Wir wollten unsern englischen Lesern mit dem deutschen Stück nicht beschwerlich fallen, und doch auch unsere deutsche Leser nicht ganz leer ausgehen lassen. Nach reiflicher Ueberlegung, aus unpartheyscher Liebe zu allen unsern Brüdern und Lesern, und mit dem Wunsche allen allerlei zu ihrem Dienste zu seyn, machten wir daher schon vor mehreren Monaten den Vorschlag, von diesem Neujahr an 16 Seiten monatlich vom deutschen "Evangelischen Besuch" zu liefern zu dem ganz geringen Preis von 50 Cents des Jahrs, welche, wenn auch fünfhundert Unterschreiber sich fänden, kaum die ersten Kosten decken würden.

Die geringe Aufmunterung indessen, die wir auf den obigen Vorschlag bis zum Schluß der December-Nummer erhalten hatten, ließ fast alle Hoffnung verschwinden, ob wir etwas zur Aufrechterhaltung der deutschen Sprache in unsern Gemeinden thun könnten, u. nöthigte uns auf der Rückseite des Deckels jener Nummer anzuzeigen, daß wir den deutschen Evangelischen Besuch bis auf weiteres einstellen müßten, sobald das angefangene Stück zu Ende sey, wenn nicht unterdessen eine namhafte Veränderung einträte. Wir wiederholten dabei die wichtige Frage: Soll denn das Deutsche ganz und gar untergehen bei uns, —in unserer Gemeinschaft?—Sind keine fünfhundert Brüder mehr vorhanden, die als barmherzige Samariter ihre zween Groschen (fünfzig Cents) darzureichen willig sind, um ihre halbtodte und sterbende Muttersprache vom Untergang zu retten?

Da wir aber gleich nach Absendung unserer letzten Nummer eine Reise nach Ost-Pennsylvanien unternahmen aus Liebe zu unsern Brüdern, und namentlich in den noch ganz deutschen Gemeinden in Lebanon u. Lancaster beinahe oder völlig eine Woche zubrachten, und ihre Zusage zur Unterstützung unseres geringen Werkes erhielten, und bei unserer Heimkunft auch mehrere Briefe von Osten und Westen mit aufmunternden Berichten wegen des deutschen Evangelischen Besuchs antrafen, so wollen wir es noch einmal wagen, einen Anfang zu machen im Aufsehen auf den Herrn, von dem allein alles Gute, und alle Kraft zum Guten kommt, und zwar unter folgenden, möglichst uneigennützigen

Bedingungen.

1. Der evangelische Besuch soll fürs erste 8, sobald aber die Zahl der Unterschreiber es rechtfertigen möchte, 16 Seiten monatlich enthalten.

2. Der Preis beim Einzelnen ist 50 Cts des Jahrs in Vorausbezahlung. Wer 10 Unterschreiber und das Geld einsendet, erhält eine Copie für seine Mühe.

3. Da es aber wahrscheinlich ist, daß die meisten auch das englische Blatt sonderlich für ihre Kinder nehmen, so bieten wir beide zusammen an zu einem Thaler 25 Cents, und wenn Jemand 12 Unterschreiber und $15, einsendet, erhält er ebenfalls eine Copie für seine Mühe.

4. Weil indessen die Unterstützung des deutschen Evangelischen Besuchs kaum hinreichend werden möchte, wenn nicht die schönen und zahlreichen deutschen Gemeinden in Pennsylvanien und sonstwo ernstlich und kräftig uns zu Hülfe kommen, so bieten wir ihnen ferner an, wenn eine Gemeinde nicht weniger als fünfzig Copien bestellt, solche (ganz deutsch) zu 40 Cts das Stück, oder (deutsch und englisch) zu Einem Thaler das Stück, d. i. den ganzen Jahrgang zu liefern.

So, geliebte Leser, sind wir gesonnen alles zu thun, was in unserem Vermögen steht, um ein deutsches Blatt zu erhalten, und es liegt nun ganz bei Euch, ob es geschehen soll oder nicht. Warte keiner auf den andern, sondern jeder suche unter seinen Nachbarn und Bekannten zu thun was er kann, und dann lasset uns von dem Erfolg bald hören.